

75¢ Per Copy

CRAWFORD, TEXAS

Vol. 7, No. 22

MAY 31, 2006

www.lonestaricon.com

© 2006, THE LONE STAR ICONOCLAST

INSIDE

Call To Mind

By Don M. Fisher



*Don't Bait
Karl Rove's
Hook*

Page 8



Texas
Commentary

By Peter Stern

*Eliminating,
Then Privatizing
The VA*

Page 9

Editorial

**Memorial Dazed
& Confused**

Page 9



Christopher Largen wants the silence broken about child abuse and has started an organization, BLOCK, to get the message out.

**Unspoken Injustice:
Your Neighbor
The Sex Offender**

Investigator Stephen Webster
Looks At A Growing Epidemic
Overtaking The Nation

Page 16

WAR IN IRAQ

Casualties:

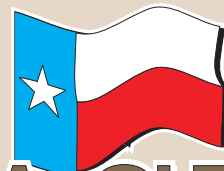
U.S. Military Deaths

2,466

U.S. Govt. Statistics



The Lone Star ICONOCLAST



New Greg Palast Book Exposes Bush's, Big Oil's

Hidden Agendas

- Blood For 'No Oil'
- Voting Fraud
- No Child's Behind Left

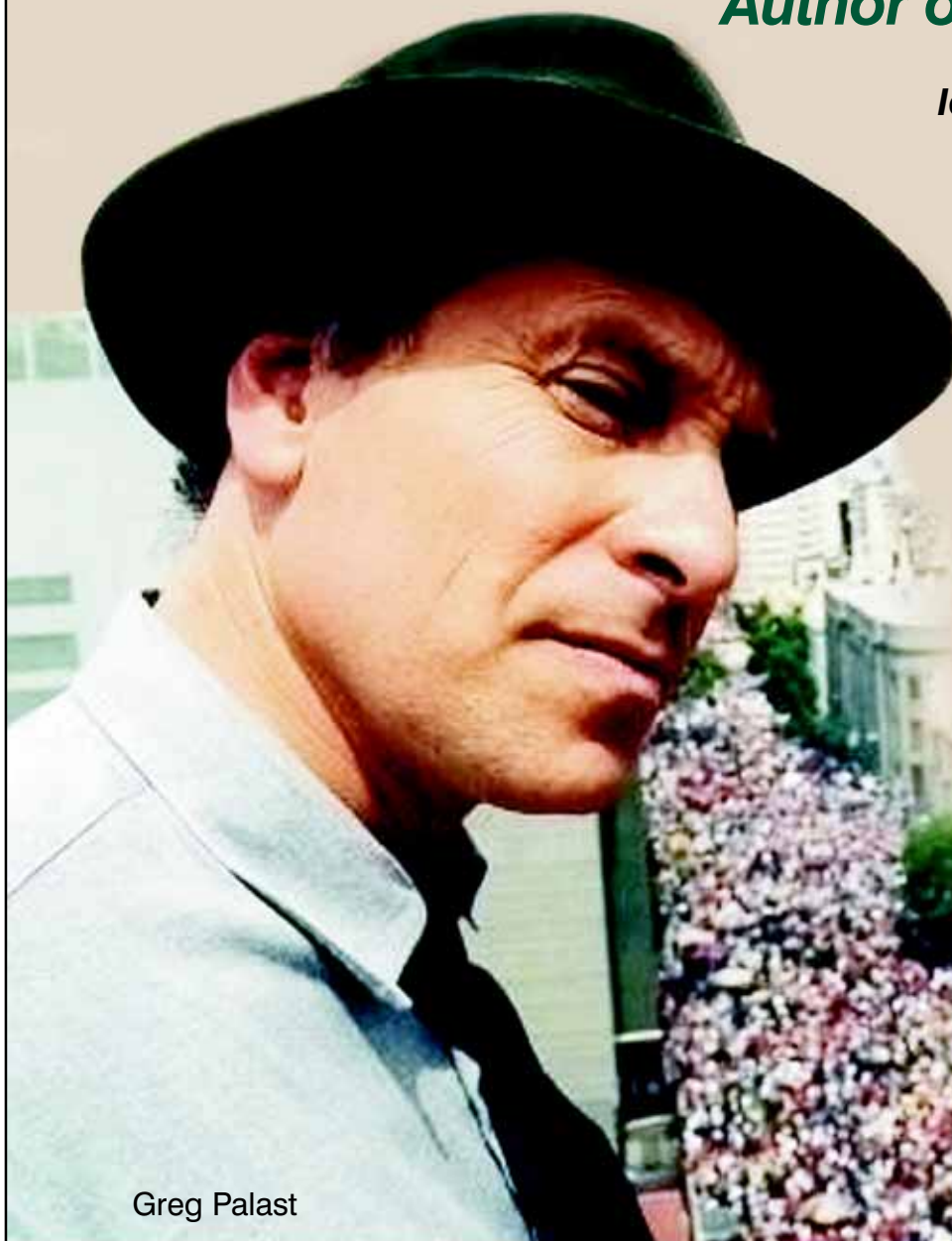
*Interview With Greg Palast,
Author of 'Armed Madhouse'*

By W. Leon Smith,
Iconoclast Publisher

Page 3

'The advantage of a Depression in the '30s was that everyone was in a Depression, even the banks, even big oil. It was everyone's Depression. What's bad now is that it is a Depression for some of us. It's a Recession for almost all of us. It's party time at the top. So, the question is how far down do people have to bounce before they realize that they've been had?"

— Greg Palast



Greg Palast



House Republicans Slash \$500 Million From Veterans Bill

WASHINGTON — An recent internal fight among House Republicans over spending ended with about a half a billion dollar cut from a bill for U.S. veterans. The cuts came after the House passed its budget, which conservative leader Rep. Jeb Hensarling (R-Texas) said he didn't want to violate.

Critics within the GOP called the deletion of roughly 20 projects from the \$94 billion bill for veterans programs and other constructions shortsighted as the United States continues to fight the war on terror. The bill itself was approved by 395-0 vote.

Democrats chided th the bill because it left out a fee increase for military retirees eligible for the Defense Department's health care program, Tricare, a shortfall of \$735 million.

If the lack of \$316 million for base closing and \$507 million for construction projects were also taken into account, argued Rep. Chet Edwards (D-TX), then the bill was short by \$1.5 billion. Edwards is the top Democrat on the military quality of life and veterans affairs subcommittee.

Democrats offered amendments, which were later shot down, that would have funded the healthcare projects through increased taxes on those who make over \$1 million a year.

The Bush administration applauded the bill but criticized its use of war reserve funds to pay for the construction projects. The White House also encouraged Congress to increase fees for higher income non-disabled veterans and military retirees under 65 through Tricare.

First Female Conscientious Objector Sentenced

FORT BENNING, Georgia — The first female GI to object to the war in Afghani-

stan and file for conscientious objector status plead guilty to the charge of refusing to obey a legal order and was sentenced to 120 days of confinement last Wednesday.

Since she has already served 53 days in confinement and 20 days off for good behavior, Army National Guard Specialist Katherine Jashinski has 47 days of jail time left and will be discharged for bad conduct. She was acquitted of the more serious charge of "missing movement by design."

Jashinski announced her conscientious objection on the eve of her deployment to Afghanistan on November 17, 2005. The Army denied her application for a discharge 18 months after filing for CO status. She was then court-martialed for refusing to train with weapons.

In court, Jashinski's superiors, including the presiding judge, said that they believed her CO claim was sincere.

Jashinski said that she is feeling triumphant and happy to have resolution. After completing her sentence, she intends to return to school at the University of Texas at Austin and continue her work with the newly founded Austin GI Rights Hotline, she said.

INFO

Austin GI Rights Hotline
thirdcoastactivist.org/girights.html

Hayden Gets CIA Top Seat

WASHINGTON — By a vote of 78-15, the Senate last Friday okayed President Bush's controversial nominee to head the Central Intelligence Agency, the U.S. government's intelligence agency.

Gen. Michael Hayden, 61, a four-star general in the Air Force, previously worked as an aide to National Intelligence Director John Negroponte, and as the head of the National Security Agency from 1999 to 2005, he oversaw the president's domestic spy program.

During the confirmation hearing, several Democrats and civil liberties groups worried about how Hayden's ties to the NSA's spy program would affect the CIA.

Oil Prices, Latin America To Top Talk At 'Bilderberg'

OTTAWA, Canada — THE AMERICAN FREE PRESS reported last week that oil prices and Latin America will main topics of interest at an annual secret meeting of world business leaders and politicians called "Bilderberg." This year's meeting will be at the Brook Street Resort near Ottawa, Canada, June 8-11.

While it remains unclear whether the group will call for even higher gas prices as it did last year in Rottach-Egern, Germany, members intend to focus their attention toward the world's fifth-largest oil exporter, Venezuela, and its president Hugo Chavez, according to an insider who spoke to AFP.

Chavez's May 7 insistence to levy a new tax on oil extraction against foreign oil companies working in Venezuela angers Bilderberg members concerned with control of the world's oil supply. Those members include such names as Jeroen van der Veer of The Netherlands, chairman of the Royal Dutch/Shell Group and Franco Bernabe of Italy, vice chairman of Rothschild Europe.

The maverick Chavez has also caused ripples through the oil industry by selling cheap heating oil to low-income Americans last winter, lowering gasoline prices to 12 cents a

gallon for Venezuelan citizens, nationalizing his country's oil interests — not to mention hindering the grip of the North American Free Trade Agreement in his hemisphere.

Of 120 international leaders in politics and finance attending this year's meeting will be a White House aide representing President George W. Bush, as well as other officials from the U.S., European and Canadian governments, reported ATP.

Other topics of interest to the Bilderberg group — which gets their name from the hotel in Holland where the group's first meeting was held in 1954 — include global warming, nuclear weapons proliferation, and conflicts in the Middle East.

The U.S.-led wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are still sore spots among the Bilderbergers from America and Europe, and the group intends to discuss the relations between United States and Iran.

The Bilderberg group has a history of hiding the location and discussion of its semi-annual meetings in which world leaders, bankers, and business professionals converge. It is generally understood that the two super-wealthy families that lead the meetings are the European-based Rothschilds and the American-based Rockefellers.

Cheney Could Testify In Libby Trial

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Though it is not certain, the special counsel in the CIA leak case indicated in a new court filing that Vice President Dick Cheney could be called to testify in the coming trial of I. Lewis Libby, Jr., the VP's former chief of staff.

"Contrary to defendant's assertion, the government has not represented that it does not intend to call the vice president as a witness at trial," said the brief signed by Patrick J. Fitzgerald, the special counsel, adding "To the best of government's counsel's recollection, the government has not commented on whether it intends to call the vice president as a witness."

According to Libby's grand jury testimony, his former boss was angered by an New York Times opinion piece by a former U.S. ambassador to Iraq

because Cheney believe it put his credibility into question. The article expressed Joseph C. Wilson IV's doubts of the Bush administration's claims that Iraqi President Saddam Hussein sought uranium from Africa in order to develop nuclear weapons.

On a copy of Wilson's article, Cheney wrote questions about whether CIA agent Valerie Plame Wilson had sent her husband on a trip to Niger to investigate the administration's claims. A July 14, 2003, syndicated column written by Robert D. Novak revealed Plame's name and led to the Libby's indictment.

Libby was indicted not for leaking Plame's name to the press but for lying to federal investigators and obstruction of justice. A court proceeding is set for next year.



The Lone Star Iconoclast (USPS 022-833) is published weekly, on Wednesdays, by Smith Media, Inc., P.O. Box 420, Crawford, TX 76638 and 310 W. 5th St., P.O. Box 569, Clifton, TX 76634

Periodicals Postage is Paid at Clifton, TX 76634.

SUBSCRIPTION PRICE: McLennan & Bosque Counties, one year: \$40; Elsewhere, one year: \$45. Give old address when requesting change of address.

POSTMASTER: Please send address change to:
The Lone Star Iconoclast, P.O. Box 353, Clifton, TX 76634.

DEADLINES: 5 p.m. Fridays.

Telephone (All Departments) — (254) 675-3634

Fax No. — (254) 675-4090 • Email: news@lonestaricon.com

Web Newspaper: www.lonestaricon.com

EDITORIAL

Associate Editors:

Don M. Fisher
Nathan Diebenow

Reporters:

Deborah Mathews
Michael Harvey

ADVERTISING

Melanie Harvey
Tammy Shelton

PUBLISHER & EDITOR-IN-CHIEF W. Leon Smith

BUSINESS

Kay Ortiz, Front Office Manager
Allison Smith, Internet Manager
Michael Harvey, Bookkeeping

CIRCULATION

Charlie Gandy
Pernie Stanford
Wayne Thompson
Bud Shaffer
Wanda Raines
Georgia Bell

THE LONE STAR ICONOCLAST welcomes letters of up to 150 words on any public issue. Any letter that exceeds the word limit may not be considered for publication. We publish only original letters addressed to The Iconoclast. An address and daytime phone number must be included so the author's identity can be verified. No letters will be published until authorship is confirmed. Those who write letters are asked to limit their entries to one per month. All letters are subject to editing. The Iconoclast reserves the right to decline publication of any submission. Letters must be signed. Letters written in the promotion of political candidates or issues to be decided by an election will not be considered for publication unless they are scheduled for publication three weeks or more prior to the election. Individuals may purchase advertising space during the period prior to the election in support of candidates or issues to be voted upon. Letters written as cards of thanks may be charged classified ad rate and be placed in classified section of newspaper, at editors' option.

THE ENTIRE CONTENTS of each issue of The Lone Star Iconoclast are protected under the Federal Copyright Act. Reproduction of any portion of any issue will not be permitted without the express permission of Smith Media, Inc.

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC: Any error or erroneous reflection upon the character, standing, or reputation of any person, firm, or corporation which may appear in this newspaper will be gladly corrected upon being brought to the attention of the management.

New Greg Palast Book Exposes Bush's, Big Oil's

Hidden Agendas

- Blood For 'No Oil'
- Voting Fraud
- No Child's Behind Left

Interview With Greg Palast, Author of 'Armed Madhouse'



Greg Palast

By W. Leon Smith,
Iconoclast Publisher

CRAWFORD — Greg Palast's new book, which has been described as "an autopsy of what happened to the American dream," has a long title, "Armed Madhouse: Who's Afraid of Osama Wolf?, China Floats, Bush Sinks, The scheme to Steal '08, No Child's Behind Left, and Other Dispatches from the Front Lines of the Class Wars."

The book covers these topics with both wit and facts, and will likely, as did Palast's previous work, "The Best Democracy Money Can Buy," sit atop the bestseller list for months. "Armed Madhouse" will be released to the public on June 6.

Palast, winner of the George Orwell Courage in Journalism prize for his reports for BBC Television and HARPER's, has a solid reputation for exposing readers to material not normally found in the American mainstream media. In his new book, Palast tells how election manipulations, Social Security chicanery, oil wars, Hurricane Katrina, and Chinese *guan* are interlinked to result in class warfare.

Britain's TRIBUNE MAGAZINE calls Palast "the most important investigative reporter of our time." His reports for BBC Television's prestigious *Newsnight* and for the GUARDIAN papers in Great Britain, along with his reports in HARPER's MAGAZINE in the United States have earned him journalism's top awards abroad.

Palast, who hails from Los Angeles and studied economics with Milton Friedman while moonlighting as an undercover investigator of the United Steelworkers' union, has over 30 years' experience in getting the goods on corporate con men, political hucksters, and "free-trade" gurus. The Palast Investigative Fund, a project of the International Humanities Center, helps fund the Palast team's investigations, research, and documentation.

According to results of his documented

research, "They've got the war making machinery, the terrorizing machinery, and control of the ballot boxes; they've got the politicians and the receipts to prove it; they've got the cash and the power...and *we've* got '*we the people*.' They don't stand a chance," notes his publishers (Dutton; June 6, 2006; \$25.95).

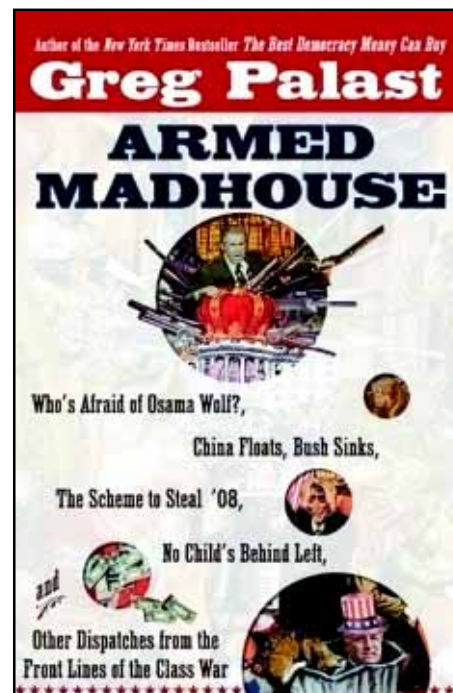
Some of the elements exposed in *Armed Madhouse*, which explains the long title, as quoted by his publicists, include:

- **Voting Fraud** — Palast is the BBC Television reporter who busted Jeb Bush's and Katherine Harris' purge of Black voters in 2000. He's turned his sleuthing skills on the suspect vote of 2004 and found a Republican cesspool of "caging lists," "spoiled ballots" and "phantom voters" that added up to three million votes gone with the wind. His chapter, **Kerry Won**, tells us how the vote was fixed in 2004 — and more important, signals the tricks that will be used in 2006 and 2008.

- **Nightmare of NAFTA** — How 95% of Americans are being left behind in this new world order run like a company town. The decimation of autoworkers and General Motors and how it's just the beginning. The truth about globalization, with confidential documents lifted straight from the vaults of the IMF, the World Bank, and the WTO.

- **Hurricane Katrina** — 1927 revisited. How the great flood of 1927 led to FDR's "New Deal," how it was taken away, and New Orleans drowned again. The privatization of the New Orleans' evacuation plan and Palast's search for the elusive plan. The *unreported* story of Enron and Arnold Schwarzenegger.

- **\$3 Gas and Iraq** — Thought Bush and Cheney had a secret plan to seize Iraq's oil? Wrong! He had *two* plans — and Palast shows you both. Here is the confidential inside story of how James Baker, the Saudis, and Big Oil fought it out with the neo-cons — in an unseen policy war that keeps our troops under fire today. Want to know why gas is three bucks a gallon? Palast, a leading aca-



democratic authority on energy prices and the top investigator of oil company shenanigans, gives the story of the Bush crews' program to keep oil prices high. And for the first time, what Dick Cheney actually spoke about in those meetings in the bunker with the oil boys.

- **Economics 101** — The complex economics of how the threat to your Social Security relates to the ballooning trade deficit with China. How Bush needs to remain best friends with Saudi Arabia to finance his trillion dollar debt.

- **The Next Oil War** — It's not Iran. The president of Venezuela, Hugo Chavez, is sitting on the largest pool of oil in the world — and why Mr. Bush's friend Pat Robertson says, "Hugo Chavez thinks we are trying to assassinate him. I think we should do it."

- **Trillion Dollar Babies** — If you suspected George Bush had a secret plan to control Iraq's oil from the day he took office, you'd be wrong. He had *two* plans and Palast has them both—the confiden-

tial documents from inside the State Department, and the full, hidden story of the titanic battle between neo-cons and Big Oil.

- **Who's Afraid of Osama Wolf?** — The macabre fun and folly of the war on terror — Ground Zero as a profit center, Osama's Operation Islamic Liberation (O.I.L.), plus the Navy's \$36 billion design for 'Marines in a Tube.' And: "On Nov. 9, 2001, BBC Television Centre in London received a call from a phone booth just outside Washington. The top-level U.S. intelligence agent on the line was unhappy about a 'back-off' directive..."

- **Class War** — Who drowned New Orleans? How much money floated in from the busted levees and where did it end up? Investigations into the collapse of General Motors, how *Ah*rnold got *Lay'd*, and how Bush is planning to have China save our Social Security system, plus—the coming assassination of Hugo Chavez.

In the book, Palast scored hundreds of pages of confidential documents from inside the Defense Department and State Departments, unveiling the plan of the Bush team to "enhance OPEC" (that is, support the high prices of the Saudi-controlled cartel).

This month, HARPER's and the BBC are carrying Palast's exclusive interview with the President of Venezuela, Hugo Chavez ... who offered, through Palast, to cut the price of oil by a third, to \$50 a barrel. Palast explains why Bush said "No."

In an exclusive interview with ICONOCLAST publisher W. Leon Smith last week, Palast described why Americans need to wake up and become pro-active in defending their country from intrusion by elected profiteers who are taking away rights and creating a class war.

ICONOCLAST: I finished reading the book about 1:30 last night and all I can say is "Wow!" Your book contains things that everybody knows but just can't put a finger on the details, and they are in this book.

Continued On Next Page

Hidden Agendas... From Previous Page

PALAST: I'm going to quote you. That's a good way of thinking about it. We have these suspicions of evil-doings out there and what I did was get the evidence. That's part of the game, investigative reporting, which isn't done in the U.S. — it's illegal under Patriot Act III or something. Some of my findings kind of surprised me, too. It's not always what I expected. Like in Iraq, I was like everyone else and thought, you know, "blood for oil." Now we know it's "blood for no oil." Worse... worse, besides blood for oil, most Americans think is a bargain.

ICONOCLAST: By the time I got to page 70 of *Armed Madhouse*, my blood was boiling.

PALAST: I hope you had a couple of laughs.

ICONOCLAST: You know, the sell-off of Iraqi wealth to Bush's buddies, the rewriting of Iraq's tax laws, and the delay to democratize in order to strip the Iraqis of their rights and wealth....

PALAST: You now, there are members of the elite that will talk, because they get pissed off, like General Garner. Look, what they do is they take the few that will come out of the woodwork... Richard Clark, General Garner, whatever, and they'll do their best to discredit them. That's the problem.

ICONOCLAST: I gather that what this means by the way that they pulled this off is that our occupation in Iraq must be perpetual. Do you have a view of where the Iraq middle class, if there is one, would be in five years. Do you have any predictions?

PALAST: Well, that's one of the problems, that they've eliminated that middle class. There are going to be a few of the winning technocrats, basically some of the Ba'athists, that had positions before in the oil industry. Those guys are going to be untouchable by anyone. They're going to be protected. The technocrats of the oil industry will be just fine. But people like doctors, professors, etc. between the maniac mullahs and the occupation forces and you've basically imposed oppression on this nation. That middle class will be gone, so the service providers will be gone. You're seeing basically a huge drain right now. It's horrendous. It's the return of this nation into an oil colony. Not that it was anything else for much of its history, but that's what it is.

ICONOCLAST: Do you believe that there are specific plans, something like Annex D awaiting the United States, or we already seeing this happen?

PALAST: Well, yeah, in a way. We've only done to Iraq the same as what's been done to us. We're occupied territory, too. We have a puppet government in Iraq, controlled by Washington and we have a puppet government in Washington controlled from Riad in Houston, but it ain't *you* in Houston.

I make the point of having a little section called the Best Little Legal Whorehouse in Texas about James Baker's law firm — the weird little fact that he actually has an office at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, with a little satellite there. When he's at Pennsylvania Avenue, he's away from the center of power, because it *is* about the oil. We are paying \$3 bucks a gallon to fill your Hummer. That's part of the class war. It wasn't a mistake. It's mission accomplished. They want a higher priced oil. It's all part of the combine. They're very happy with this. Exxon Mobil picks up \$10 billion bucks every three months net profit; that's what they



Greg Palast uncovers confidential State Department documents.

declare, right? Then you have a schmuck like Congressman Barton who's been taking oil money forever, complaining that Lee Raymond got a \$400 million bonus. Big deal, I think Raymond got ripped off. The value of Exxon Mobil oil reserves under Bush, under the war regime, has gone up by one trillion dollars. Giving this guy \$400 million is only four percent. You give a bigger tip to a waitress. Lee Raymond has really gotten shafted. There is no question about it.

ICONOCLAST: How do you think Jimmy Carter got pulled into Baker's web?

PALAST: (Laughs) Let's not forget. There is one party in America, the party of cash. This is one little happy crew. Carter's always been part of the Baker crew. He's always been subordinate to Baker. They know who the Alpha dog is. Just like Gore knows who the Alpha dog is, right? Al Gore talks about global warming, but when he was vice president, he pushed this whole plan of crud credits trading, which basically was written by the polluters lobby and there is no one more responsible for global warming than Al Gore. He's laughing at you rubes buying his DVD.

There is one party. I'm not one of those that feels there is no difference. There is. The Republican Party has become the kind of SS of the class war...the real shock troops. They take no prisoners. And that's a serious business. A guy like Jimmy Carter is always going along with this new gimmick of ID cards and he says there's no sense in having ID cards unless you're going to have national spy networks to build databases to make use of these ID cards and to check whether you've got the right ID. And you can't have, as was pointed out by several Republican congressmen who are salavitaing at the idea and is shown in the book, we are now building a national information DNA database. Mayor Bloomberg of New York just wrote a *WALL STREET JOURNAL* piece saying, hey listen, we're going to have to have a DNA database. Mmmm. Now, that goes back to the first chapter of the book. Who fixed the elections for George Bush in 2000? The company ChoicePoint. The database giant. Who gets the no bid war on terror contracts? ChoicePoint. What do they do with their money? They're building databases on Americans, Venezuelans, and Argentines. Does this have anything to

do with the war on terror? Well, unless the information is wrong, the guy that hijacked the plane came from the Gulf. But there is no database building on the Saudis. They wouldn't dream of it. King Abdullah would not like that *one little bit*. So, on September 11th we're the victims. September 12th, we're the suspects. Good system. Now they're using the databases to jigger the next elections.

ICONOCLAST: Down here in Texas, most of the people think that securing Iraq's oil will simply provide more and drive the cost down.

PALAST: Has it?

ICONOCLAST: No. Your book takes a different strategy that that's not how OPEC works.

PALAST: Once I saw it, it became obvious. It really surprised me. Yeah, I thought, we're going into Iraq, blood for oil. Like I said, most Americans think that's a bargain, but the truth is that we didn't go into Iraq for any oil. We went to Iraq to prevent it from coming out.

Actually, we went in because Saadam was jerking the markets. That is out of your Texas Baker Institute and the Council of Foreign Relations. They met with Dick Cheney in March of 2001 in his bunker — no kidding — they really went over the oil maps of Iraq with Ken Lay there. The reason why Ken Lay was there, which is very confusing, was not just because they wanted a criminal element, because there's plenty of unindicted conspirators that were in the room. But Ken Lay was part of this Council on Foreign Relations group that was planning our planet's energy future. They make it convenient for us so we don't have to know all the icky details. Our betters have put together the program. They met with Dick Cheney. But people in on the planning have been talking about it, like some people in the industry.

Once I uncovered these documents, (I found) there were a lot of participants in the planning who really wanted to justify what they were doing. Or, in some cases, they didn't realize that I don't speak to anyone without my tape recorder on.

ICONOCLAST: I am surprised that you got these people to talk.

PALAST: Sometimes, they actually don't know who they're talking to. I do something called investigative reporting. It really is, I think, illegal under Patriot Act III or something in America. But I'll tell you one thing I do, except the states

where it is illegal to do so, only six of them, I record. I record phone conversations. I'm wired, and they don't necessarily know exactly who they're speaking to. Inside the book, you'll see the actual documents from the plans of the oil fields of Iraq. What we have planned for our oil that is under Iraq's sand. It took two years at work. It's not just Greg Palast. I'm the nose on camera. I'm the guy with the pen that writes the book, but there is a team of investigators, including one of our Swiss investigators, who speaks multiple languages and has about 12 functional accents.

They don't know who the hell they're talking to, man, and I'm not gonna tell them and I don't have to. I'm sorry.

I did have James Baker's people threaten to sue me. They said that I made this stuff up. I had one of the big guys from Hess Oil who was in on the whole scheme and planning to say that he never spoke to me. And then I played them the recordings. (Laughs).

ICONOCLAST: What do they usually do then? Are they violent, or what?

PALAST: Well....I've had different reactions. Like one of George Bush's buck buddies, a crazed billionaire from Toronto. You know, George Bush Sr. had a piece of the action in the gold mining business. Most Americans don't know that and for good reason. Anytime it's ever reported, the reporter gets sued. It doesn't matter what evidence you have. It's billionaires who figure they can just silence you by waving expensive suits at you. That usually works. They silenced the Toronto Globe. They silenced papers out of Washington. They silenced the *NEW YORK TIMES*. I know this for an absolute stone fact — with threats. Doesn't matter if you have the facts, they've got the money. They can bleed you for a million bucks on losing lawsuits. They don't care. Then there are more direct ways. In some cases, they've beat up and arrested my sources. And I have to say, without being dramatic about it, but I think I'm up to about 200 death threats. Most of those I would put in the whack category, but, whacks can be dangerous. I do watch it, like when I was just down in Caracas, my staff went completely bonkers because it was supposed to be a deep secret, and I'm down there, because there really are armed, dangeous people and I am on a take out list down there. So I was supposed to literally kind of keep my head down. I was watching the President, Hugo Chavez. I was in the audience at a TV show that he has. I thought in was interesting to see this kind of crazy ass variety show that he has each week — brilliant ideas and a way to communicate to the people around media mogals. Kind of a song and dance show, right? And suddenly the president sees me in the audience and says "Greg Palast!" (laughs) "Come on up. How is your Spanish?" And I say "*bon atos*" which means an atrocity. It is terrible. I speak, like, tourist Spanish. And suddenly, I'm on national TV. There is my cover.

ICONOCLAST: Got blown, didn't it?

PALAST: That was not very, very good, I have to say. That was not one of my big brain moments. My staff just went ape shit fucking wild. But, on the other hand, I got a pretty good story out of it. The other guy couldn't speak English very well. It was a ratings killer especially because I wanted to talk about heavy oil.

Here's an interesting one. Hugo Chavez last month told me he would cut

Continued On Next Page

Hidden Agendas... From Previous Page

the price of oil to \$50 bucks a barrel. He just wants to cut a deal with Bush. But Bush doesn't want to cut any deals with Chavez. In *Armed Madhouse*, I quote Pat Robertson, "Hugo Chavez thinks we're trying to assassinate him and I think we ought to go ahead and do it." That's because Chavez will give us the oil cheap, but he ain't going to give us petro-dollars and that's the lifeblood of this system.

What we had in the Iraq chapter was fascinating to me because we actually had the two plans. We had the neo-cons who really did want to get the oil out of Iraq. And their purpose was not for you, Leon, to fill up your Hummer, but their idea was that this would bring the Saudi Arabians to their knees — get more oil, drop the price of oil, destroy OPEC, wipe out Saudi Arabia. And that's when Jim Baker and team came in and said you don't *ever, ever touch the Saudis*. And for a good reason . . . James Baker literally represents the kingdom of Saudi Arabia. He represents the defense ministry and Exxon and George Bush. But it's not because he wants to seize from Saudi Arabia. That's not the issue. The issue is that King Abdullah provides not only big profits to big oil, but King Abdullah provides the petro-dollars that keep our economy from imploding completely.

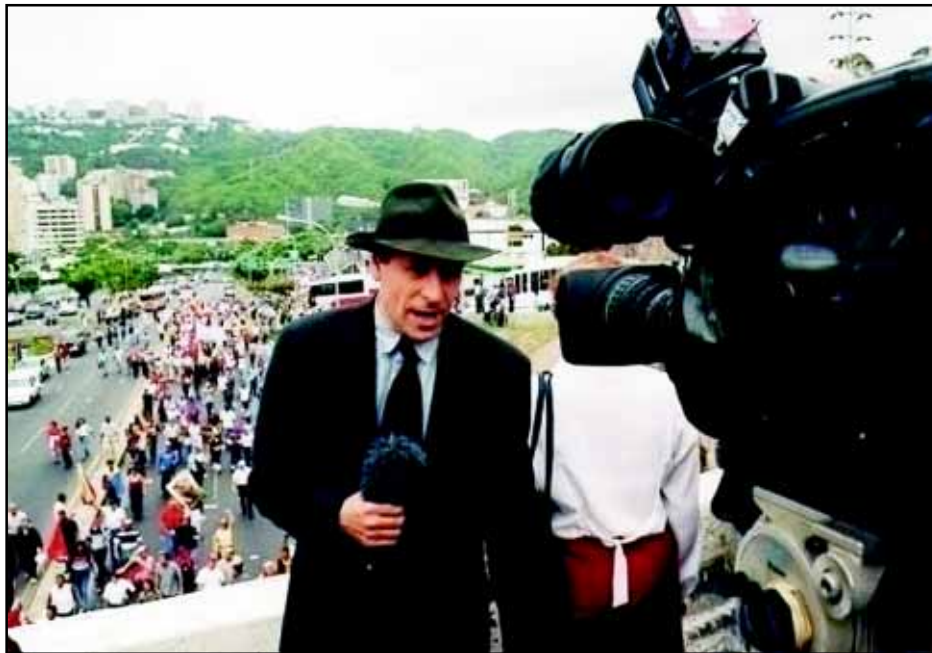
ICONOCLAST: Do the Saudis pull any other strings here politically?

PALAST: I think that their direct influence is overstated. Their influence is because they have the same interests as big oil, that is higher prices. We have a cartel. It's an illegal monopoly. What a convenience that it can't be touched because it is a monopoly established by sovereign states beyond the reach of the United States. It's not clear to me why they are beyond the reach of U.S. law. Criminal states can be charged with crimes and cartels are an international crime, punishable in a United States court. But somehow they've gotten away with it. The oil companies don't have to sit in rooms and fix prices. They've got a bunch of dictators in bathrobes and crowns that will do it for them. The price of oil out of Texas is charged by the price that the Saudis set and they just love it. The last thing they're going to do is allow that system to be busted down. They're not going to allow anyone to touch that system. Because the Saudis basically speak with the voice, they have two things going for them. They are conjoined at the hip with big oil and their power, but they also do really have this tremendous authority through their petro-dollars. It's not through the oil. Abdullah and his harum can't drink all the oil. Abdullah has to sell us oil. Most of it actually goes to Japan and Europe. Abdullah has to give us the oil money to buy the U.S. Treasury bills and keep the current regime able to spend \$2 trillion more than we have.

ICONOCLAST: That's when you talk about the spike in gasoline prices actually being an indirect tax?

PALAST: That's right. If they did a direct tax, people would revolt and say, "What? How dare you!"

It's a couple thousand bucks a year per family. Imagine if Bush said, "Okay, no inheritance taxes, tax cuts for the rich, more breaks for oil companies, oil wars. Here's what it's going to cost you. It's going to cost you another three grand a year. Here's the bill for the average schmuck." People would be revolting in the street. But you charge them 3 bucks a gallon, they go, "Well, uh, oh gosh, we're



Greg Palast attends a Chavez rally in Venezuela

running out of oil. It's peak oil. We don't know who to blame."

ICONOCLAST: It's somebody else doing it.

PALAST: Yeah, something went wrong. Too bad. And there is endless propaganda how the Saudis are trying to hurt us to produce as much oil as possible. They are withholding a million and a half barrels a day off the market. If the Saudis pumped another million and a half a day, which they could do without breaking a sweat — there are a lot of questions about their long-term ability to produce oil, but I'm not talking about that. I'm talking about Thursday. Thursday, they could push another million barrels of oil into the pipe. That would drop the price of oil 20 bucks a barrel. Tomorrow. In hours. In minutes. Do you think

about it. That's the first thing.

That's how they're winning... because you're not even allowed to talk about it.

You're not allowed to talk about what's happening to the average person here.

You have to understand, to get King Abdullah to give us his money, we have to give him our 82nd Airborne. We also have to give him a pound of flesh, despite the Koran's prohibition on collecting interest. These guys are pretty good at whacking it to us. We have to raise interest rates. Interest rates and high oil prices have destroyed our auto industry in the United States of America. Forget the stuff that GM is dumb and builds gas guzzlers. That's beyond the point.

The high price of oil, but especially the high price of interest — GM's entire loss can be totally attributed to the rise in in-

‘They’re building databases on Americans, Venezuelans, and Argentines. Does this have anything to do with the war on terror? Well, unless the information is wrong, the guy that hijacked the plane came from the Gulf. But there is no database building on the Saudis. They wouldn’t dream of it. King Abdullah would not like that *one little bit*. So, on September 11th we’re the victims. September 12th, we’re the suspects. Good system. Now they’re using the databases to jigger the next elections.’

— Greg Palast

the Saudis want to do that?

ICONOCLAST: Of course not.

PALAST: Do you think Exxon Mobil wants to do that? And here's the question: Do you think Dick Cheney wants them to do that? The answer is absolutely *no*. In fact, one of the things I bring out is that when you've had these spikes, he refused until there were people completely screaming after Hurricane Katrina. He wouldn't open up the strategic petroleum reserves and, in fact, in the middle of a price spike, he was buying more. He was actually pulling oil out of the market. That's just beyond imagination. He is using U.S. taxpayer dollars to *prop up* the price of oil. The strategic petroleum reserve is there to *knock down* the price of oil. There is no limit to their evil.

ICONOCLAST: When you talk about the elections, you said New Mexico is the new America. I'm assuming you're taking the approach that that is going to happen even more and more between the classes?

PALAST: We have a class war in America and we're not allowed to talk

interest rates and the rise in their interest payments.

They say greedy auto workers. Excuse me . . . Japanese auto workers . . . Japan is doing quite well in the auto industry. And Japanese auto workers get paid more. And auto workers for Japanese companies here get paid as much as . . . they match the union contracts so that they can keep the union out. What's happening here is that, for the most part, George Bush loves it. Which industries are going down? It's not one economy. It's two. You are losing the auto industry and the airline industry from high interest rates and high oil prices and both are the last bastions of a private unionized workforce. They love it. They just love it. And the other danger that they had was the South beginning to turn back to the Democratic column so they washed out New Orleans and Louisiana that were about to shift to the Democratic column.. They didn't blow up the dikes but they certainly weren't going to stop it.

ICONOCLAST: How do you stop the problem of ballots not being counted and thrown away and the minorities not be-

ing represented? How do you do actually do that? Do you have any ideas? You explain in your book exactly how they cause this, but how do we stop it from happening?

PALAST: I think, two things.

One, you expose light on them. You turn on the lights, the cockroaches crawl to the walls. You gotta keep doing it. After I reported how Jeb Bush and Katherine Harris wiped the 2000 voters off the voter rolls, those guys of greed were sued by the NAACP and said they'd never do it again. Then they did it again in 2004. It just means that you have to keep your eye on them. That's the beginning of it.

Two, you gotta keep, even sometimes when you have protests or whatever, you've gotta keep voting. I'm not saying that they have to steal the next election. What I really say is that while the Democrats appear to be conceding it, it's just that the Republicans begin with a million votes in the machine before the balloting begins. That is, they know that the machines are set up in such a way that a million black votes won't be counted. They know that before we begin, so then, a million more black people better start voting to make up for the brothers whose votes don't get counted. If on native reservations, we are looking at precincts where the machines are recording no votes. Then you better jam those precincts where the votes get recorded.

ICONOCLAST: There are several groups that are fighting the companies that manufacture the machines and they're taking that front. Is that going to be useful at all?

PALAST: Nope. I think that there has been way too much distraction with computer voting. I'm going to tell you something real blunt that a lot of my readers aren't going to like . . . this is a big white concern. They're not stealing white votes, they're stealing Black votes and Hispanic votes and they're not stealing

it by computers. That's not how it's being done. While the upper middle class is worried about computer voting because they vote on computers, the upper middle class are worried about *their* vote. In Black communities and on the Indian reservations, and in Hispanic communities especially, you've got Goddamned old fucked up punch card machines and paper ballot machines without optical scanners in the precincts. You've got a mess of a cheap old crap voting system and that's how the votes get stolen.

ICONOCLAST: Their machines come down to the local authorities, am I right?

PALAST: The Secretaries of State are being paid off, literally. It's a corrupt system in which every Secretary of State knows that if they pick these new computer voting systems, that they will get jobs and contracts and their brothers will get jobs and contracts. The only thing that is more corrupt than the gambling business is the vote machine business. It is vile with corruption and payoffs and political kickbacks — in Florida, New Mexico, you name it. You don't even want

Continued On Next Page

Hidden Agendas... From Previous Page

to bother with Texas . . . with corruption it's off the wall.

But we shouldn't be moving to computer voting machines. They cost four times as much and lose more votes than good paper ballots with optical scanners right there where you can check whether your ballot is being read. I agree that we should be fighting computerization, because you have to ask yourself why would politicians spend more money to get machines that don't work as well? The answer is that they like the fact that they don't work as well. It's a game that has to do with statistics. I used to teach statistics. They don't need Lex Luthor pressing a button with Carl Rove to change your vote from Democrat to Republican. As an Hispanic organizer in the book says, that's the Hollywood sexy version of how you steal votes. Let's get rid of the DaVinci Code idea of heisting elections. That's not how it's done and it's going to be done in the next election. Texas, by the way, through the ID requirements, that's what they want. Hispanics are going to get just reamed with this one.

We have 3.6 million ballots in the last election cast and never counted for one damn reason or another. Provisional ballots that they decide they didn't like the precinct you're in. . . same president, wrong precinct. A crap machine that hung your chads. We made fun of hanging chads in 2000? There were more of them in 2004 and no one said a damn word. Okay? We have a broken Democracy and we've got to start shining a light on it. The first thing that's gotta happen is that the white kids have got to understand that this is a racial issue. The white people have got to stop talking about their computer votes in the suburbs and start talking about why votes aren't being counted in the barrio and in the ghetto and on the res.

ICONOCLAST: You say in your book, "I fear the election was an intelligence test that America flunked."

PALAST: Yeah. Look, 3.6 million votes weren't counted. If they had been counted, there would be a different guy in the White House. But one thing I don't doubt, I showed in Mexico that Bush scored more votes than there are voters . . . got a lot of undead voting for Bush. There's a lot of those games. Kerry won the election. Certainly, Al Gore won the election...in terms of getting the ballots.

The thing is, is that you still have 59 million people that pulled the lever or

punched a hole for George Bush. You have 59 million pinheads who did it to themselves. Now, they have an excuse . . . you have to lie to the American people. But as Daniel Ellsberg says, that's pretty easy to do. Then they do the scare thing. You know, they're coming to get us. They're crawling across the border. They're hijacking our planes. Georgie, save us. And, of course, they give you the old whoodo that if boys kiss boys, we're in deep trouble. We don't want gay people to be married, we want to make sure that they hang out in bars and just have a bunch of one night stands.

ICONOCLAST: Where do you think America should find that lost intelligence if you can't find it in the mainstream media?

PALAST: The weeklies. The alternative press, so called. That's the weird thing. It's not alternative, it's the real press. It's not the manufactured news. It's not the organic news.

My reports are available. Even if you can't watch my reports on American television from BBC News, you can watch them on the Internet. Until Patriot Act IV, you can still read the books. It's your job to go out and get that info. They want to make you passive, right? That's why the info-tainment. They want to dumb us up. And we can just say, "No." The first thing I'd do is just take the TV and throw it out the Goddamned window. If you have an open sewer pipe running into your living room, you'd shut it down. You'd close it up, right? If you have open news bullshit being pumped into your living room, unplug it. I don't have a TV. I think it's crap. Get the needle out of your arm. Don't let them do it to you. Don't let them hypnotize you. Don't let them swing that watch in front of you.

ICONOCLAST: You say in your book that tort reform is meant to disarm you politically.

PALAST: In Texas this is a big issue. **"Too many lawyers. Kill the lawyers, blah, blah, blah."** Let me tell you something. **That's the biggest crock of shit out.** The one thing that we have in the United States of America that's unique is the right of the little guy to sue the big guy on a level field at court.

And let me tell you something, one of the most evil things I've seen this year from the Bush Administration...one of the

most *evil things*... in the indictment of the lawfirm Milburg Weise this week.

Think about it. The Ken Lay verdict is coming down. Their boy went coming down, right? What was the law firm that whacked Enron and its co-conspirators in the banking community who knew exactly what they were doing? It was Milburg Weise that brought those class action suits. They were the number one class action firm against corporate America. They were the number one threat to these guys.



Greg Palast

They were whacking these corporations for their shenagians and bringing money back for the average schmuck. They represent pension funds, like the California State Pension Fund. The Bush administration was making a point. Now, I've worked on indictments and racketeering, I used to be a racketeering investigator. They could have brought that case a year ago or a year from now. They were making a point. While the closing arguments were being made in the case against Ken Lay, they got the guys that got Ken Lay. That was very important. Think about it.

We have, for example, this company, ChoicePoint, that has been sucking down your DNA information and everything else, that basically chose your president for you by coming up with these scrub lists. The fact that there was any control at all was that they were sued. The NAACP sued them. Another bunch of lawyers. The one thing we have is the right to sue these bastards. And they want to take that away. It's one of our very last rights. They took the White House. They took the Supreme Court. They took the Congress. What's left? The courtroom. That's what they're going after. When they talk about tort reform, they're not saying anything about removing the right of these big companies to sue you, for example. You know what they strengthened? Copyright laws. The laws against getting drugs from Canada that are cheaper. So the big corporations have a strengthened right to sue you. They are talking about ending your right to sue the big boys. That's what's at stake.

ICONOCLAST: What do you think private protection attorneys ought to do. Can they do something as a group or do they just need to change perception?

PALAST: One thing they're looking at is that by going after the biggest class action law firm in America, they also went after the biggest political donors to the Democratic party. These guys are the big money. They're the last big money left. One thing that I think the lawyers should do is that they should start explaining what it is they do for the public. Now, there *are* a lot of these guy just in it for the cash anyway, but so what? We have our gunslingers; but they've got theirs.

I noticed that, for example, Jim Baker represents the government of Saudi Arabia. You know, we have George Bush saying that we have lawyers running amok? It was George Bush that sued to stop the count of the vote in Florida. Suddenly, lawsuits are just fine. When you want to shoplift the presidency and you want to stop the cops from grabbing you, suddenly lawyers can be very useful. Very selective here, isn't it?

By the way, your Texas boy, Jim Hightower, read for the audiobook, the Best Little Legal Whorehouse in Texas.

If you go to <www.gregpalast.com> you can download that.

ICONOCLAST: Do you think George Bush would have converted the land of opportunity into a landscape for fear and sedition had there been no 911, or was that merely one of many possible tools.

PALAST: These guys are what I call culture opportunists. They've got to have something to attach to. I mean, you've got ChoicePoint talking about the pizza guy coming to get you. They're going to find something.

September 11 was tailor made. They didn't have to create it, they just had to be ready for it. The Patriot Act was written before September 11. They had the stuff ready to go. They just wait for the opportunity. Bush was like, "Hey, that's our signal to go into Iraq." He just couldn't sell that one right off. He had to kind of keep up the drum beat of Osama and Saadam going steady. So they are culture opportunists.

Now, September 11 was like the trifecta. He really hit it there. So, obviously, that allowed for much more mischief than usual. But they would have found something.

ICONOCLAST: Where do you think our country would be today if H. Ross Perot had become president? Would we be better off?

PALAST: Well, it would have been in one sense, and having nothing to do with Perot. Having to do with the fact that — imagine that if the main political parties had just been fucking kicked in the ass and where the people, a popular uprising of average schmoes saying we've had enough.

Would Perot be a great leader, a great president? I don't have the slightest idea. He's a combination of genius and whacko. I don't know.

So it's not about him.

I am talking about the movement that he began to create of a working class reaction. When the Democratic party told the working class, the reform party, to go stick it and Al Gore basically said to the average American, "Screw you. I don't care," that was the end of it.

Image if Perot had instead just kicked the ass out of the mainstream parties. He reminds me a lot of Huey Long who changed the Democratic Party. But, see, there it was different. In 1927, the levies broke in New Orleans, as I explained in the book. That changed the political landscape of American forever, because we had a politician that stood up and said, "This shit ain't going to continue. This has gotta come to an end." And Huey Long created the New Deal. Franklin Roosevelt, rather than, unlike Al Gore and Bill Clinton smothering the movement, Franklin Roosevelt saw this as a ticket to the presidency and said, "That's what we need."

ICONOCLAST: Do you think we're going to have to have another Great Depression to awaken everybody.

PALAST: Well, if you are living in Detroit and work for Delphi Auto Parts, you're in a depression. If your kid has liver problems and you don't have health insurance, you're in a depression. So what it is is that the advantage of a Depression in the '30s was that everyone was in a Depression, even the banks, even big oil. It was everyone's Depression. What's bad now is that it is a Depression for some of us. It's a recession for almost all of us. It's party time at the top. So, the question is how far down do

Continued On Next Page

BULLETIN BOARD



CC, Etc.

675-3511 • 675-3732 • Toll Free 866-439-4794
402 N. Ave. G (Hwy. 6), Clifton



About Greg Palast...

When Greg Palast, an investigator of corporate fraud and racketeering, turned his skills to journalism, he was quickly recognized as "the most important investigative reporter of our time" in Britain, where his first reports appeared on BBC television and in the GUARDIAN newspapers.

Beginning in the 1970s in Chicago, having earned his degree in finance studying under Milton Friedman and free-trade luminaries, Palast went on to challenge their vision of a New Global Order, working for the United Steelworkers of America, the Enron workers' coalition in Latin America, and consumer and environmental groups worldwide. As an investigator for the Chugach Natives of Alaska, he uncovered the oil company frauds that led to the grounding of the Exxon Valdez. His racketeering probe of a nuclear plant operator led to one of the largest jury judgments in U.S. history.

In 1998, for Britain's OBSERVER, he went undercover, worked his way inside the prime minister's inner circle, and busted open Tony Blair's biggest scandal, "Lobbygate," chosen by Palast's press colleagues in the UK as "Story of the Year." As the CHICAGO TRIBUNE said, he became a "fanatic about documents" — especially those marked "Secret and Confidential" from the locked file cabinets of the FBI, the World Bank, the U.S. State Department, and other closed-door operations of government and industry — that regularly find their way into Palast's hands. The inside information he obtained on the Rev. Pat Robertson won him nomination as Britain's top business journalist.

Author of the NEW YORK TIMES bestseller, *The Best Democracy Money Can Buy*, Palast is best known in his native USA as the journalist who, for the UK's Observer, first broke the story of how Gov. Jeb Bush had thousands of Black Florida citizens purged from voter rolls before the 2000 election, thereby handing the White House to his brother, George W. His reports on the theft of the election of 2004, the spiking of the FBI investigations of the bin Ladens before Sept. 11, and the secret State Department documents planning the seizure of Iraq's oil fields have won him a record six "Project Censored" awards for reporting news the American media generally refuses to cover. "The top investigative journalist in the United States is *personal non grata* in his own country's media," says the ASIA TIMES.

Palast has returned to America to report for HARPER'S MAGAZINE. His Sam Spade-style television exposes about elections manipulations, the War on Terror and globalization, are frequently seen on BBC's *Newsnight* and Amy Goodman's *Democracy Now!*

Palast, who has led investigations for government on three continents, has an academic side: the author of *Democracy and Regulation*, a seminal treatise on energy corporations and government control commissioned by the United Nations and based on his lectures at Cambridge University and the University of Sao Paulo.

Palast, Guerrilla News Network's "Guerrilla of the Year," is Patron of the Trinity College Philosophical Society, an honor previously held by Jonathan Swift and Oscar Wilde. He has also been awarded the ACLU's Upton Sinclair Freedom of Expression Award and his writings have won the FINANCIAL TIMES' David Thomas Prize while inspiring the Eminem video, Mosh. In the BBC documentary *Bush Family Fortunes*, Palast exposed George Bush Jr.'s dodging the Vietnam War draft and won the George Orwell Courage in Journalism Award.

"An American hero," said Martin Luther King III. Greg Palast, says Noam Chomsky, "Upsets all the right people."

Hidden Agendas...

From Previous Page

people have to bounce before they realize that they've been had? The problem we run into is that we don't have national spokesmen to say the average person is getting the shaft. The only thing that came close to in the last election, oddly, was John Edwards. He had to bring up the issue of class in America. But the Democratic Party leadership said, "No, that being demagogic. You can't use that line." And, of course, he was a trial lawyer.

ICONOCLAST: I think that probably hurt him a little. That comes back to the perception idea that people distrust lawyers. But, then again, lawyers are probably the last hope of getting the country turned around.

PALAST: Well, you know, suing bastards is one of our last chances. But we have to do it all. We have to vote. We have to march. We have to sue. We have to join organizations. We have to be active in our unions. We have to get our churches rocking and rolling.

For more information on Greg Palast's upcoming book tour or to pre-order a copy of *ARMED MADHOUSE Dispatches from the Front Lines of the Class War*, visit <www.gregpalast.com>.

Palast Public Appearances

Armed Madhouse will be released by Dutton/Penguin on June 6. Palast will visit the following cities to talk about the book:

- Portland, Ore. — Monday, June 5
- San Francisco, Calif. — Tuesday, June 6
- Wednesday, June 7
- Friday, June 9
- Seattle, Wash. — Thursday, June 8
- Los Angeles, Calif. — Friday, June 9
- San Diego, Calif. — Saturday, June 10
- Chicago, Ill. — Sunday, June 11
- Washington, D.C. — Monday, June 12
- New York, N.Y. — Tuesday, June 13
- Wednesday, June 14
- Thursday, June 22
- Boulder, Colo. — Thursday, June 15
- Denver, Colo. — Friday, June 16
- Albuquerque, N.M. — Saturday, June 17
- Austin, Texas — Sunday, June 18
- Houston, Texas — Monday, June 19
- Albany, N.Y. — Wednesday, June 21
- Atlanta, Ga. — Friday, June 23
- Tampa, Fla. — Saturday, June 24

Former Enron CEOs Found Guilty

HOUSTON — After six days of deliberations and four months in federal criminal court, a jury last Thursday found the former Enron Corporation chief executives guilty of conspiracy to commit securities and wire fraud.

Enron founder Kenneth Lay was convicted on all six charges against him which in sum total of both the corporate and personal banking trials carry a combined maximum penalty of 165 years in prison.

Former Chief Executive Jeffrey Skilling was convicted on 19 of 28 counts and acquitted on the other nine. The maximum penalty for his charges consist of 185 years in prison.

The verdict, in essence, placed full responsibility on the two corporate chiefs for the demise of their energy trading

company that was once the seventh-largest company in the United States, with a market value of more than \$60 billion.

As a result of the company's fall in 2001, about 5,600 Enron's employees lost their jobs and roughly \$2.1 billion in pension plans were voided.

In the wake of a series of scandals that rocked the mega-business community, Congress passed the Sarbanes-Oxley act to hold executives more accountable for their practices.

The jurors stood unconvinced of Skilling's claims that the only fraud at Enron was committed by other greedy executives and that the company tanked from bad press and a bad market.

Sentencing is set for Sept. 11. Skilling wants to appeal.

Mexico's Fox Happy With Senate Immigration Bill

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — Mexican President Vicente Fox called the U.S. Senate's immigration bill "a monumental step forward" while giving a speech at the California state legislature last week.

Passed by a 62-36 vote, the bill, which still needs to be combined with the more conservative House bill, gives a route for portions of the 12 million illegal immigrant workers to attain U.S. citizenship.

The legislation, backed by President Bush, has provisions that increase border security and implement guest-worker programs, but representatives in the U.S. House have expressed that they would not give an inch to their reform bill that criminalizes illegal immigration.

Immigration reform itself has turned into a fall election factor for American politicians, and California was no exception.

Demanding recognition, millions of illegal immigrants and immigrants' rights

activists took to the streets around the country in protest of the House measure this past spring. In response, anti-immigration groups have tried to patrol the U.S./Mexican border.

Fox's presence in Sacramento polarized the California legislators, some of whom boycotted the foreign president's address last Thursday. Others donned badges that read "No mas" — or Spanish for "No more" — in reference to their distaste for the illegal workers, many of whom are Mexican, though quite a few are also from Central America as well.

Republican Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and Californian Democrats took advantage of Fox's visit to assuage the Hispanic community.

CORYELL COUNTY COMMISSION CO.

Sale Every Saturday

Cattle 12:00 Noon
Jody & Robin Thomas
(254) 865-8219

Date: 5-20-06

No. 1 Steers
under 300 lb. 160-210
300-400 lb. 130-155
400-500 lb. 120-137
500-600 lb. 110-126 Steady
600-700 lb. 100-119
700-800 lb. 95-105

No. 1 Heifers
under 300 lb. 140-185
300-400 lb. 120-140
400-500 lb. 110-126 Steady
500-600 lb. 105-120
600-700 lbs. 95-114
700-800 lbs. 88-98

Slaughter Cows
High Yielding 45 to 52
Low Yielding 37 to 42 \$1 Down
Fats 44 to 49
Thin & Shelly 32 to 39

Packer Bulls (1250-2075 lb.)
Yield Grade 1&2 57 to 67 Steady

Cow & Calf Pairs
Young Choice 1100 to 1275
Young Fair 900 to 1100 Steady
Aged Pairs 650 to 850

Young Pregnancy Test Stocker
Replacement Cows
500 to 1050 Steady
Number of Head....828

Gatesville
Jody Thomas (254) 865-8219
Sale (254) 865-9121
Mobile (254) 223-2958

To Advertise In
THE ICONOCLAST,
Call
(254) 675-3634.

Thanks For
Your Support.

C & C Collision Center, LLC



- Truck
 - Trailer
 - Auto
- Repair Specialists

"We Make Friends By Accident"

www.cccollision.com

- Free Estimates at your place or ours
- Pick-up & delivery (if needed)
- PPG certified paint specialists
- Fiberglass specialists
- Expert frame straightening
- Computerized Comp-Est and Mitchell Estimating Software
- Eagle Spray-on Bed Liners
- 30 day billing for Approved Fleet Accounts
- DOT inspections for commercial trucks and trailers
- State inspections for automobiles
- Lifetime warranty
- E-mail updates regarding your vehicle (pictures included)

254-848-7008

1-888-345-1178

5849 N. State Hwy 6
(Speegleville Area) Waco

Don't Bait Karl Rove's Hook

As Uncle Hugh used to say, "Ever' con man's got a whole world of people ready to help him out."

And they're off!

Bill Frist is in the lead with the whole marriage thing and a new twist: Defending God's right to kill U.S. soldiers for defending a country with homosexuals in it and making sure nobody can wed a same-sex.

Which leads me to wonder whether that ol' hide with the pink hair and the tarantula eye make-up isn't really transvestite with a Wal-Mart fixation.

But I digress.

Kloset Karl Rove, has the congressional campaign pickup loaded with gap-toothed dufuses (dufi?) and blessed baseball bats ready to go queer knockin' again this fall.

These boys had so much fun during the presidential race, they're ready to make bloody sure no same-sex invades your home in the middle of the night to marry some unsuspecting innocent like you.

Truth is, with everything from a declining standard of living to a spurious war we never intended to win, the fascist Republicans have to devise some distraction to keep our noses in the trough where they are feeding us our children.

Not to mention continuing to generate the greatest human migration in history.

Right now Konvict Karl is recycling homos, but he will come up with some equally irrelevant intellectual masturbation to feed the media mill.

And the opposition will, once again, help him.

That's the problem with liberals.

They don't stand for anything.

They just don't like bad stuff, as carefully defined by somebody's Committee to Certify Correct Bad Stuff Oppositional Dogma.

So, all Brer Rove has to do is set that tar baby in the middle of the road and wait for the liberals to start punching and kicking it.

Karl Rove is not a genius, as the TeeVee hairdos would have you believe.

He's a con man.

Somehow it is more laudable to cheat people than burglarize their houses or rob them at gunpoint.

If Karl Rove is a genius, so was Clyde Barrow.

Who, coincidentally, was bi-sexual.

Will these parallels never end?

It is not enough to oppose evil.

Americans love evil.

They may heave a sigh and a wish while they watch the Discovery Channel re-enacting America taking other people's stuff, from territory to oil, but during the commercials they're still driving 80 and buying their neighbor's job from a Chinese Wal-Mart.

Whatever the ruse de jour this fall, you can count on liberals to rise to Karl's lure like a greedy trout with a midge vendetta.

So, for what it's worth, here's how to take over both the House and the Senate next fall.

DON'T DEFEND THE INDEFENSIBLE!

Most Americans aren't comfortable with homosexuality, and they aren't going to be for another generation or so.

But for the most part, we don't want them mistreated.

I cannot think of a worse idea than allowing the government to define marriage.

Unless it's to define "parent," which is next.

Still, for all practical purposes, there's no winning this fight for the cameras.

It will just inflame their crazies and paint those who believe in human dignity with the looney brush.

Ignore the ruse and do your work after the election, the way the fascists do.

Unlike racism, this issue needs a social, not a legal solution.

When the irrelevant arises, don't rise with it.

Stay on message.

The fascists certainly do.

But then you've got to have a message.

And liberals don't.

So, screw liberals.

Where else are they going to go?

The Republicans aren't going to welcome too many bunny huggers.

"That is a red herring, and it is irrelevant to the problems of working people."

Memorize that sentence and repeat after me . . .

Now, here are the real issues, and here's how to get America's attention.

CRUSH THE OIL COMPANIES!

Every home in the country needs a solar panel, a wind generator, and a methane collector.

We'll give you one.

We have an "energy crisis" and an "ecological problem" in this country, yet we create enough energy to blow up the average city and flush down the toilet or set it out by the curb every day.

We have to devise technology to keep it from blowing us up.

So, we create jobs by providing people with the means to eliminate their electric bills.

And we replace the railroads John McCain tore up with sensible and cleaner personal passenger service.

Drive your little electric cars anywhere in the country, riding the rails or a power strip down the middle of the highway.

You think America loves Shell?

Offer them a chance to close it down and see what happens.

And we pay for it all with taxes on oil company profits.

Demagoguery?

In politics?

How could we?

That's the problem with liberals.

Call To Mind

By Don M. Fisher



They'd rather lose clean than win dirty.

That's because liberals usually don't work for minimum wage.

FREE HEALTH INSURANCE!

Whole issue settled in three words. And when the TeeVee commercials begin:

"Insurance companies are evil.

"You hate them; we hate them, too.

"Only fascist Republicans who take their bribes like them.

"Kill 'em all."

Okay, if you're going to wimp out, they can share a cell with Kenneth Lay.

Insurance companies are like rattlesnakes.

They need to stay under their rocks and eat rats, not run the ranch.

IT'S ABOUT WORKERS, NOT IMMIGRANTS!

About 80 percent of Mexicans crossing the border already have jobs.

Make those paying jobs, and the immigration problem will end.

Moving costs money.

Moving illegally costs a lot more.

Dump NAFTA.

Hey, we're Americans.

Treaties are no big deal to us.

Just ask any Cherokee.

If an American company is going to operate outside the country, it has to pay American wages.

If a foreign company wants to import goods to the United States, it has to pay American wages, or we don't want your stuff.

Sure, we can negotiate.

We'll set up a graduated wage equalization compliance program.

Meanwhile, let me introduce you to your new best friend, the AFL-CIO.

They'll be operating trade unions in your country where they'll be regulated solely by American labor laws.

Or else.

Nobody is a "guest" who wears out his welcome by keeping American wages low.

You can hire anybody you want.

Nobody has to go home.

Unless they want to.

CRAZY? YEAH, YOUR KIND OF CRAZY!

Here's the final point: It doesn't make any difference whether they call you crazy, just as long as they call you in Washington, D.C.

All issues in American politics are negotiable.

That's the way the system works.

Single-minded government resulted in the mess made of this country during the last decade, and unilateral politics on either side of any issue is prone to make the same kind of mess.

But progressive compromise begins with radical initiatives.

And such initiatives have scared those who oppose Republican fascism back in the briar patch where liberals feel safe.

And so does Brer Karl.



MUELLER, INC.
STEEL BUILDING SYSTEMS & COMPONENTS

Now Stocking Material for Customer Pickup
Call For Availability — Delivery Available

Waco: 800-525-3814
Mark Noland (ext. 5426) - Roland Hicks (ext. 5427)
5591 N. Hwy. 6, Waco • 254-848-2560 • Fax: 254-848-9997
www.muellerinc.com

PERSONAL INJURY & WRONGFUL DEATH



IN WACO: 254-772-7500
www.withvic.com
1-877-WITH-VIC
9 4 8 4 8 4 2
SERVING CENTRAL TEXAS
WITH OFFICES IN WACO,
TEMPLE AND AUSTIN

THE LAW OFFICES

Vic Feazell P.C.



TRIAL ATTORNEYS & COUNSELORS OF LAW

Principal office in Austin.
Meetings with attorneys by appointment only.



MEMBER
BETTER
BUSINESS
BUREAU

Eliminating, Then Privatizing The VA

The handwriting is on the wall! The Bush administration doesn't want to maintain the VA as a government agency and is pushing to dismantle it.

It is interesting to note that the VA works so very well it's been used frequently as the example to institute a national healthcare program, which is an issue sidestepped and hated by most Republicans.

One of the problems inherent in the VA system is under-funding of taxpayer dollars to do the job adequately and also the governmental and bureaucratic politics

that appear to dictate every cornerstone of the system.

The VA has many individual and group success stories. According to Larry Scott's Sept. 29, 2005, commentary printed on <Military.com> entitled *Dismantling VA*:

"In the aftermath of hurricane Katrina we learned that VA was the ONLY healthcare organization that managed to save ALL patient records. This is because VA uses a computerized system that was backed-up on a regional level and put back online in a matter of

hours. Now that system is under attack by Rep. Steve Buyer (R-IN), Chairman of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs. Rep. Buyer wants to eliminate regional control of the system under the guise of saving money."

However, the VA is a part of big government. While the Bush administration sees no problem in its ongoing invasion into the every day lives and activities of the American people, it wants to cut-down dramatically the tax dollars paid into various social and economic programs that benefit the masses who need them. The VA now is one such target for eradication as it continues under government auspices.

Ideally, the Bush administration looks at the VA as a private sector function — and why not? It is another ripe plum for an administration whose wealthy special interests rule and whose major insatiable objective is to acquire an endless stream of profits. Millions, perhaps billions, may be made by privatizing the VA. Rightly so, Veterans groups are enraged and frightened by this overt and very possible hostile takeover by the current administration and its corporate special interests.

In September of 2005 a move occurred towards privatization when the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs approved S. 1182 (Sec. 10), which takes tax money from VA's healthcare budget to study outsourcing jobs of VA healthcare workers. The study, with VA healthcare funds going to private consultants, could cost well over \$160 million and lead to the loss of up to 40,000 VA jobs. Most Democrats voted against it, but it was approved and is a current study.

Dismantling and privatizing VA is a big job, but the administration and the corporate sector are trying to sell the idea to the public.

The VA is an integral lifeline for all Veterans of past and current wars and service eras. The Bush administration, with no problem providing "Corporate Welfare" to its own special interests, abhors the function and status of the VA by viewing it as another form of mass social welfare. The attacks by the administration on the VA and veterans' benefits will continue. The majority of service organiza-



Texas Commentary

By Peter Stern

tions know it, yet all they do is go before a committee and testify that veterans are good people and deserve their benefits, while in actuality, their dues-paying members are waiting months for treatment at a VA facility or getting no treatment at all due to the ongoing cutbacks of tax funding, personnel, equipment and pharmaceuticals, and special interest power-plays.

Eliminating the VA in favor of privatization is a major priority of the Bush administration, right along with the privatization of Social Security. The government will stop at nothing to pursue ever-greater profiteering.

Once again, it hinges upon our nation's self-respect to our Veterans who are heroes being cast aside by a greedy government and corporate regime. American citizens with a conscious for doing the right thing, along with those Veterans needing the system, must pound-down the doors of the Bush administration and demand that the VA remain under the rubric of government. To enable privatization of the VA will ensure that to most Veterans needing the system it will become unaffordable, much as the current healthcare insurance system is unaffordable for most Americans. It will be an endless battle to keep the VA free of the pending corporate takeover.

Peter Stern of Driftwood, Texas, a former Director of Information Services, University Professor, and Public School Administrator, is a political writer well-known and published frequently throughout the Texas community and nationwide. He is a Vietnam-era Disabled Veteran and holds three post-graduate degrees. You may contact Peter Stern at: <pstern@austin.rr.com>.

Editorial

Memorial Dazed & Confused

We The People of the United States should be ashamed of ourselves.

Weeks before Memorial Day, our nation's day of remembrance for those who died while serving in the U.S. military, we have failed yet again to serve our living veterans.

Nevermind that every single member of Congress voted to cut \$735 million for active duty health care and \$1.82 billion increase in veterans' health care — or \$1.5 billion — from the fiscal year 2007 budget.

We should have known better and done something to prevent these cuts, especially for those service men and women currently entrenched in two wars that have stretched our nerves too thin as it is.

Sure, the bill increases veterans' health programs up \$2.6 billion to \$25.4 billion and up \$1 billion to \$21 billion for the Defense Department health program, but we could have done more.

Done more of what exactly? Prepare for peace, not war.

We must remember from this Memorial Day on that we will never win the so-called "global war on terror" with our own unique, \$462.7 billion brand of terror tactics and gizmos, as the White House has requested for FY 2007.

No, if we want to win the hearts and minds of those who are also victims of terrorism, we need open our eyes and our wallets with love and compassion to make the world we want.

We can start with the 300 million children (70 percent of whom are girls) liv-

ing in hunger around the world by helping their mothers and other women remove them from poverty.

James Morris, executive director of the United Nations World Food Program (WFP) said it best in an interview with Reuters:

"If the headline in the media tomorrow was 'Forty-five 747s crashed today, everyone on board was killed and oh, by the way, they were all children,' the world would be outraged."

According to WTP's numbers, 18,000 children die every day for want of food, which is the equivalent of six times the number of people who died on U.S. soil in the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001.

You know, if 50 percent of children under five are chronically malnourished in Central America, as Morris has noted, then you would need not wonder why there is rampant illegal immigration happening across the U.S.-Mexican border.

When the largest spending in the world is over \$950 billion annually in military and arms trade in 2003, as noted by Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SPIRI), then the \$38.32 (or 30 euros) a school year that can be spent so a child can eat doesn't seem so expensive, now does it?

The alternative is crystal clear. If we're going to cut anything, we should cut to the chase, and put our money where the mouths of starving children are. Their healthy bodies and minds equal everyone's security. Remember that.

— Nathan Diebenow

Sources:

House Conservatives Cut \$500M Off Vet Bill

<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2006/05/19/ap/politics/mainD8HN30380.shtml>

World unaware of major hunger crisis

http://www.int.iol.co.za/index.php?set_id=1&click_id=143&art_id=qw1148310184253B243

High Military Expenditures In Some Places

<http://www.globalissues.org/Geopolitics/ArmsTrade/Spending.asp#WorldMilitarySpending>

Lone Star Iconoclast
CACKLEBERRIES
Fun Pages
Check It Out At
www.lonestaricon.com

Greetings, from the bottom of the birdcage!
Hatch an egg to see what's inside...

Yakov's Catch-Phrase No Longer Applies

Remember Yakov Smirnov, the Russian actor/comedian who was relinquished to the United States as a result of détente, then numbed our minds by appearing in every other movie and on television ad nauseum?

And, how his meteoric rise to recognizability was eclipsed by an instantaneous drop into the abyss of what morning radio personalities refer to as the "Where Are They Now?" file?

A short net search resulted in several facts: Yakov became an American citizen in 1986; he co-starred with the late, great Don Knotts in a short-lived sitcom during the early 1990s; you can find him headlining at the "Yakov Smirnov Theatre" in (where else) Branson; the current theme of his show is a celebration of his 20th Anniversary as a U.S. citizen — a status of which Mr. Smirnov is extremely proud.

What was his catch phrase, anyway? Oh, come on, unless you lived in a cave or on the lonesome prairie, there's no way to forget:

"Is this a great country or what?"

I don't wish to diminish Yakov's enthusiasm for his adopted country. After all, coming from Soviet Russia to the U.S.A. of Jimmy Carter, or even Saint Ronnie Reagan, had to have been like walking through the Pearly Gates (at least in terms in human freedoms).

The query that comes to my mind is, does Yakov still use that same catch phrase?

Really, it surely isn't as applicable as it was 20 or 30 years ago.

Then, considering the typical make-up of the Branson vacationer, it may be exactly what the audience wants, and likes, to hear.

At the risk of appearing close-minded, but feeling no impetus to put Branson on a travel itinerary anytime in the foreseeable (or unforeseeable) future, the chances I'll find out for myself are nil.

Unfortunately, the prevailing 3rd Millennium, 21st Century response to Yakov's rhetorical question "Is this a great country or what?" has to be a resounding:

"NOT ANY MORE!"

We are a Nation in serious trouble, from sea to shining sea. Virtually every entity that holds us together is at odds within itself, or straddling the knife-edge of collapse and ruin.

King George has families arguing among themselves over his asinine policies and harebrained, outlaw schemes; friends can't converse without politics or religion creating rifts, even altercations.

Civility and all reasonableness have gone AWOL during this Regime's power mad reign, just as a certain Air National Guard Flight Lieutenant was AWOL during the VietNam quagmire.

All Attorney General Alberto Gonzales can do is hide behind perverted interpretations of The Constitution, bastardizing the greatest document man has ever written every time he defends the illegal activities of George Walker Bush.

Never before has executive power been abused to this extent, mutilating so much of what incalculable numbers of courageous Americans — and immigrants, legal or otherwise — have sacrificed to provide liberty and emancipation for all who seek it within our borders.

All with the blessings of the Department of Justice, the Republican-controlled Senate and House of Representatives, and, of course, the ever-expanding Right-wing activist Judiciary. Let us not forget the mainstream



Out Of The Blue

By Jerry Tenuto

media's complicity in this forced expropriation of human rights. The absolute uppermost precept of the Federal Communications Commission is that all licensees operate "in the public interest;" not far behind is the requirement that any news presentation be honest, fair, and equitable.

The only "public interest" anyone at the FCC seems to concern themselves with anymore is whether or not the Christian Right finds all programming morally acceptable. As for news, far too much of which is currently supplied by corporate masters, the general rule is "air anything that won't do too much damage to our pals at the White House."

Where would Gonzo be if there had been a wall between the U.S. and Mexico 80 years or so ago?

Take the philosophies employed in defense of King George XLII's wiretapping scheme, and its associated collection by the NSA of electronic data on billions of communications between American citizens since 9/11/2001 (if not earlier than that).

One excuse is that it's darn hard to know where those pesky terrorists might be at any given moment, so the intelligence community has got to keep track of everybody's contact patterns. They actually have the impudence to compare it to the Franklin Delano Roosevelt White House hunting for German and Japanese spies during World War II.

Note to George: We're not fighting the Wehrmacht or Imperial Japanese Army.

Yet, every time King George gets caught with his hand in the cookie jar of illegality, Gonzo intones the "but it's Constitutionally acceptable" mantra.

The Attorney General fails to acknowledge that George repeatedly sidesteps and ignores bills enacted through Congress and signed into law by Presidents truly worthy of leadership stature afforded by the office.

Regarding the NSA data collection at the whim of the White House, the AG cited a 1979 Supreme Court ruling, attempting to pass off the information collected as "business records," and as such not entitled to 4th Amendment privacy considerations. However, by taking this route he is completely by-passing the 1986 Electronic Communications Privacy Act, wherein a prior court order is necessary before call records may be turned over to the Government.

Time and again Gonzo has conveniently cherry-picked an older law or court ruling to justify the illicit overreaching edicts of the King. "The Government is bound by the laws Congress passes," stated Kate Martin, director, Center for National Security Studies, "and when the Attorney General doesn't even mention them, it is symptomatic of the Government's profound disrespect for the rule of law."

In a move that mirrors one of the major gripes our Nation's crafters had against the monarchy from which they broke free, agents of the Gonzo Justice Department slipped into a Congressman's office under cover of

darkness, on Saturday night, May 20, 2006 when no official would be anywhere near the Hill, for the sole purpose of searching and seizing without any restraint or authoritative oversight.

The FBI agents who carried out the raid did not invite the Congressional sergeant-at-arms, or anyone else charged with protective duties, to observe the ransacking of Louisiana Democratic Rep. William J. Jefferson's office.

Now, Jefferson is not number one on my list of Democrats that I'd toss a life preserver to were New Orleans to flood again, but there are wrong ways and right ways to go about extracting information.

With 219 years of adherence to the Constitutional principle of separation of powers, as well as the speech debate clause therein, House leaders Dennis Hastert and Nancy Pelosi concurred jointly that the DOJ was wrong in seizing records from his office. The anger among members of Congress, to have any lawmaker's official House suite swooped down upon in such a manner, is both widespread and deeply felt.

This is a new low for the Bush Regime, a giant leap for Fascism in America.

Again, Gonzo's DOJ is attempting to assert it is on Constitutionally solid ground; meanwhile, the White House is tossing white doves to GOP members of the House, trying to assure them they're not going to be raided.

In other words, this was a bloated assault to divert media focus onto one, solitary Dem who happened to take a measly \$100,000 — during a period when his Republican colleagues were amassing ungodly wealth at massive taxpayer losses. It's kind of interesting that not one of those crooked-beyond-belief GOP lawbreakers on the Hill ever became the subject of such intense scrutiny.

But, if GOP members aren't in danger of having their monetary affairs examined, who leaked the report to ABC News that Majority Leader Hastert was being investigated for his ties to Abramoff? Perhaps "Rovetribution" for not keeping the House Republicans in lockstep, plus taking sides with the Democratic enemy in daring to call out the Regime and DOJ for the lawless miscreants they truly are.

This intellectually-challenged, morally-deficient Regime, under the inhumane thumbs of Herr Oberst Karl Rove and Dark Lord the Dick Chaney, had the chutzpah to agree with an article written by Iranian-American Amir Taheri, friend to Neo-cons, in the Canadian *National Post* that included unsubstantiated claims of legislation to require Jews and other religious minorities wear distinctive color badges.

A reader poll was included at the article's conclusion:

"Dangerous Parallel: Is Iran turning into the new Nazi Germany? Share your opinion online..."

Despite its initial confirmation by the Simon Wiesenthal Center, the story was officially revealed as unfounded.

One look at King George's record and policies, under the guidance of Herr Rove, with Gonzo running interference, and it's easy to see which Regime more reflects being on track to be the Fourth Reich.

As if this Regime isn't far enough to the right, Herr Oberst Karl Rove is bringing another Karl-with-a-K into the elite White House Gruppe Aufsehern (Bunch of Overseers). Since Policy Advisor Claude A. Allen was caught swindling discount stores in a "return item switch" scam last February, no person has held

the job. It was recently announced that on June 12 American Enterprise Institute scholar and editor Karl Zinsmeister would take over the position.

Karl #2 has written three books defending the Iraq war, calling it a noble effort. Wow! That's a book a year! He's also written articles commending the efficiency of Wal-Mart operations — no unions, no retirement plan, no medical plan, locking employees in overnight, strong-arming suppliers to sell below cost, etc. This guy sounds like a real charmer. (It was a Wal-Mart competitor, Target, where Allen was caught scamming.)

Incidentally, AEI is the lockstep organization where Herr Rove gave a policy speech last week...

Just when I thought it couldn't get any worse, an employee of the Department of Veterans Affairs managed to let personal data of 26,500,000 of my fellow post-VietNam-era vets and me get in the wind. One of the very first, most fundamental concepts the military teaches everyone in basic training or boot camp is the extreme importance of secrecy.

Keep whatever you know to yourself.

Period.

If you work with secret documents, do not for any reason take them home.

Especially when there's been a rash of break-ins in your neighborhood!

Gugutso! (My spelling may be off, but that's Italian slang for "squash head," like the vegetable.)

One final observation:

Just when we had thought Georgia was turning the corner, and leaving behind its reputation as the state known for five-toothed goobers and pick-up racin' rednecks, the state school board took a couple of gigantic steps backward all the way through the 20th Century and back to, well, I'll be generous and give them credit for post-"Period of the Unpleasantness with the Industrial Yankee North."

The school board instituted a new test for all seniors, passage of which was intended to be mandatory for graduation from high school.

An unpredicted flaw came to light when a noticeable percentage of seniors could not meet the minimum requirements.

So, the state board, in its collectively infinite wisdom, came to a decision: All the student has to do is come close.

Now, thar y'go. That's sump-mmm' t'shoot fer, ain't it?

As one grandmother put it, "...I don't think having everything hang on a single test is right."

Well, that may have worked in 1960, but it won't fly in the 21st Century.

Want to venture a guess as to which test gets failed most often? Why, it's the very subject His Excellency, King George XLIII puts so much store in to make sure our "kids is learnin'" — Science.

Irony is so ironic.

But when you think about it, the dufus 18- and 19-year-old of today is the path to a guaranteed Republican vote in the future, and red state Southern blind allegiance.

Shalom, y'all!

(Jerry Tenuto is an erstwhile Philosopher and sometime Educator. A veteran with seven years of service in the U.S. Army, he holds a BS and MA in Communications from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale. Depending upon your taste in political stew, you can either blame or thank Jerry for his weekly "Out Of The Blue" feature in THE LONE STAR ICONOCLAST. Visit his blog BLUE STATE VIEW at illinoiscentral.blogspot.com)

President Lamar Saves Woman From Gallows

The shadiest lady in the Republic of Texas faced the death penalty after a Houston jury found her guilty of forgery on May 22, 1839.

Nothing is known about Pamela Mann prior to her popping up in the Mexican province of in the midst of the Revolution. Cashing in on the shortage of beds at Washington-on-the-Brazos, she opened a boardinghouse for the delegates to the independence convention.

During the hasty evacuation of the temporary capital after the Alamo massacre, Sam Houston mourned the fact that the journey was the first in five years he had begun with a clear head. For the sake of tradition, the proprietress playfully offered him a drink, which the commander reluctantly declined.

Pamela joined the seat-of-the-pants

retreat to eastern Texas, where she loaned the army a yoke of oxen to pull a heavy cannon through the mud. When Houston turned south to keep his appointment with destiny at San Jacinto, she demanded the return of the team.

Over the impassioned protest of the startled general, Pamela reclaimed her beasts and disappeared down the road. Vowing to talk some sense into the stubborn civilian, the wagon master rode after her only to reappear an hour later with his shirt in bloody tatters. Pamela had horsewhipped the impudent officer to within an inch of his life.

By 1837 the enterprising woman was back in the hotel business. The rumor around boom-town Houston was that Pamela was peddling more than rooms at the Mansion House, a strong suspicion

This Week In Texas History

By Bartee Haile



sustained by her lively late-night local trade.

Prostitution was tolerated as a necessary evil by the lenient authorities, but they could not ignore the criminal complaints brought against the popular hostess. Nevertheless, a series of accusations ranging from larceny to passing counterfeit currency earned her nothing more severe than slap-on-the-wrist fines.

Then, in December 1838, Pamela was

accused of falsifying a receipt with the bogus signature of William Barrett Travis. Since the charge was forgery, a capital offense in the law-and-order Republic, bail was out of the question.

Pamela spent nearly five months in a crude log jail crammed to capacity with prisoners of both sexes. The absence of adequate ventilation, sanitation and nourishment on top of the shocking lack of privacy made the hellhole the scandal of Texas.

Madder than a wet hen after her terrible ordeal, Pamela showed up in court looking like a wild-eyed banshee. Despite the best efforts of her advocate, Sam Houston's own law partner, neither counsel nor client held out much hope for acquittal.

The open-and-shut case went to the all-male jury on May 20, 1839. After the 12 retired for the night, word spread that a stubborn holdout had deadlocked the deliberations by refusing to cast a guilty vote on strictly circumstantial grounds.

The debate resumed early the next day and raged until sunset. The longer the jury was out, the attorney assured Pamela, the better her chances of beating the rap.

At seven o'clock that evening, the weary jurors trudged back into the courtroom with a compromise. The lone dissenter had finally agreed to go along with his exasperated peers on the condition that the conviction be accompanied by a recommendation of mercy.

Bound only by the verdict, the judge disregarded the unsolicited advice and condemned the Jezebel to death. He instructed the flabbergasted sheriff to carry out the unprecedented execution at Hangman's Grove on Jun. 27.

In an editorial echoing public opinion, THE MORNING STAR shelved its usual support for rope justice to criticize the stern sentence. "We cannot consider the act of forging a receipt for the trivial sum of four hundred dollars a crime dreadful enough to be punished with death."

Going over the judge's head in a direct appeal to the president of the Lone Star Republic, the jurors implored the chief executive to consider "the peculiar situation of the accused being a female, a mother, and a widow." While everyone expected Mirabeau Lamar to commute the death decree to life imprisonment, they forgot there was no place to put an inmate for such a long term. Texas had yet to build a penitentiary.

The president had two other distasteful choices: public flogging and branding. Dismissing both punishments as far too severe for the "gentler" gender, he granted Pamela a full pardon.

Other than Chipita Rodriguez, hanged in 1863 because her lawyer dropped the ball, women were spared the supreme penalty no matter how heinous their crime. After the state assumed the responsibility for executions in 1924, more than 500 men were put to death before Texans could finally stomach gender-blind justice.

Yet even a cold-blooded killer like Karla Faye Tucker had her vocal supporters, who argued up until the moment of her 1998 execution that she did not deserve to die. The pickax murderer should have been spared, they reasoned, not because she was a woman but because she found God on death row.

"Outlaws & Lawmen" - "Best of This Week in Texas History" Vol. VI available for \$10.95 plus \$3.25 postage and handling from Bartee Haile, P.O. Box 152, Friendswood, TX 77549. And don't forget to visit www.twith.com.

Drinking From A Blackwater Trough

When corporate power and state interests converge — when the private sector discovers a way to vote its self access to the people's treasury and usurp its military power — democracy breaks down. Benito Mussolini, the fascist dictator of Italy during World War II, knew this type of governance well. He once said that *the first stage of fascism would be better known as corporatism: a perfect merger of corporate and state power.*

Ted Koppel, in a recent NEW YORK TIMES editorial, called for *the formation of a number of private, corporate armies.* Formerly a power only held by the state, and the public if you count militias, is now being undertaken by our corporations to be used to further their own interests.

"Just as the all-volunteer military relieved the government of much of the political pressure that had accompanied the draft, so a rent-a-force, harnessing the privilege of every putative warrior to hire himself out for more than he could ever make in the direct service of Uncle Sam, might relieve us of an array of current political pressures," says Koppel.

"So, what about the inevitable next step a defensive military force paid for directly by the corporations that would most benefit from its protection?" he continues. "If, for example, an insurrection in Nigeria threatens that nation's ability to export oil (and it does), why not have Chevron or Exxon Mobil underwrite the dispatch of a battalion or two of mercenaries?"

He arrives at a frightening conclusion: "The United States may not be about to subcontract out the actual fighting in the war on terrorism, but the growing role of security companies on behalf of a wide range of corporate interests is a harbinger of things to come."

Immediately, one private army-for-hire in particular comes to mind: The Blackwater Group.

Formed in 1997 by an ex-Navy S.E.A.L., The Blackwater Group began as a training center for our nation's SWAT police forces, then moved up the rope a notch or two when it started dealing high-tech weaponry to police, and training



The Webster Retort

By Stephen Webster

them how to use it. One example of this is the *ultrasonic weaponry* employed by the New York Police Department during the 2004 Republican National Convention protest. These weapons are also used in Iraq to disperse crowds. They are known as "less lethal," and have developed a reputation for shattering eardrums. But there is so much more than just that.

Blackwater scored with all the right people when they sent forces into New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina. Unbound by that pesky Posse Comitatus law (which Bush argued *against*), Blackwater imposed a strange brew of corporate-style law enforcement and state-sponsored pseudo-martial law, placing their mercs in front of homes owned by the rich, and sending teams into the projects to confiscate weapons and "keep the peace." Some say most of the reports of gunfire can be tracked back to these guys, but all the chatter is little more than hearsay. (Purely speculative: wouldn't it make sense if it was just a practice-run for a larger operation, and the government's lack of intervention afterward was intentional; perhaps allowing or encouraging this type of corporate criminality? After all, there are still *thousands* missing after the storm. We may never know.)

Since then they've been getting no-bid contract after no-bid contract providing support and security for corporate interests in Iraq and Afghanistan. Present-day Blackwater maintains a 'for hire to the highest bidder' mantra. They are conflict-neutral. They are American Hesitians.

Now, a major figure in the media has come out in support of this. What types of rules govern a military beyond the oversight of our oversight-phobic government? And what will become of our military when the

hardened, four-tours in Iraq, career soldiers realize that their fortunes will not be made in service to their country? What could happen to our police and National Guard if this mentality *really* gains momentum?

Perhaps Koppel is right when he says this is "a harbinger of things to come." Imagine, a decade from now, America having disbanded the National Guard and police. Corporations bid on city, state and federal law enforcement contracts, and neighborhoods are split into sections, each controlled by one group or another. It would be the perfect merger of state and corporate interests. And it makes a sort of twisted, economic sense. Hey, smoke some pot and you'll answer to the Phillip-Morris peacekeepers. Jaywalk and you'll be picked up by some GMC mercs. And God forbid you try to evade the public security cameras on every street corner. Fujifilm's eye in the sky (another RNC 2004 protest holdover) will make sure Motorola's boys in black swoop down on you in no time. *And we'll all get wonderful tax cuts! Hooray!*

I'm just hypothesizing. No Need to Panic, right? But considering the revolutionary changes we've seen over the last decade — let alone the last five years — I think it is important to be one step ahead of the fascists. Well, perhaps fascism is too strong a word for this stage in the game. But I find it hard to dismiss subversive evil as a 'prank' of Beelzebub.

Should major disaster strike again, as it surely will, you can count on hearing more and more about The Blackwater Group. And not much of it will be good. Keep an open mind here, my friends and readers. We're looking at a double-edged sword. But in my small amount of life experience, the wielder of such a weapon always ends up injured.

Stephen Webster is an Investigative Reporter with THE NEWS CONNECTION, Staff Writer with George W. Bush's hometown weekly THE LONE STAR ICONOCLAST, and a former Contributor to THE DALLAS MORNING NEWS' Science & Technology section. For more of Webster's musings, visit GonzoMuckraker.BlogSpot.com.

Apparently, Going Ape For Girls Starts Early

At age six, my son is beginning to understand a fundamental truth regarding the complex nature of the male/female relationship, which he summed up with the following conclusion:

Girls make boys act stupid.

He then offered irrefutable evidence to support his theorem:

Brittany told Joey to act like a monkey at lunchtime. And he did. Until Mrs. Flipendorf caught him stealing someone's banana.

There was no debating his conclusion since it was clearly airtight. Instead, we discussed the ramifications of this groundbreaking sociological insight and how, as a man, he essentially had two options in catching a girl's attention. The first is to act cool; the second is to act like a monkey. As his father, it was my responsibility to break the news to him that, as my son, he better start working on the monkey thing.

I made this realization as early as the second grade, when, in an attempt to demonstrate my coolness and win the affections of Mary Avioni, I ate a handful of chalk dust. My coolness factor lasted approximately 2.5 seconds, which is how long it took for my stomach to send everything — including my morning snack of Lorna Doones and milk — back out with enough force to reach Mary Avioni's desk from six feet away.

Mercifully, God intervened and we moved three months later.

The following year seemed ripe for finally establishing my coolness. This decision was hastened by the arrival of a pretty Spanish girl named Zobada



Life Is A Funny Place

By Ned Hickson

Siuslaw News

Sanchez, who immediately divided an entire class of third-grade boys into Cool Guys and Monkeys. I immediately devised a new plan for coolness. Something that had almost no chance of initiating my gag reflex.

I would, of course, win her over with my athletic prowess.

(Regular readers of this column: I know you already realize this was a big mistake but please stay with me.)

Re-living the details is still a little painful. I can tell you it was the best tetherball performance of my elementary school career. I can tell you I was a dominant force, delivering a thunderous game-winning blow so loud it could ALMOST be heard over the crowd of third-grade spectators, all of whom began screaming after witnessing my nose relocated to the back of my head when I was hit by my own kill shot. A special counselor was brought in to help my classmates deal with their trauma. Meanwhile, I was lying in the nurse's office with a nose roughly the size of a manatee, realizing my coolness would have to wait another year.

Mercifully, God intervened again and Billy Guthery barfed in the cafeteria on

"Succotash" day — a sight that easily eclipsed my historic face plant.

When I fell for Sarah Getlost in the fourth grade I was taking no chances. My father explained to me that women couldn't resist a man in uniform. He told me this while wearing a white T-shirt, Dickies pants and drinking a beer, so I had to take his word for it. My plan was to wait for our little league candy sale and go to her house dressed in my new baseball uniform.

In theory, it was a good plan.

In reality, Sarah Getlost answered the door wearing a cheerleader outfit, effectively neutralizing me. So, to impress her, I gave her my candy, a new baseball and all of my money. Needless to say my coolness was not established. Especially after my mother found out and I was forced

to return to Sarah's house and ask for all my stuff back. I don't remember exactly what I said, only that it was awkward and involved a lot of gulping to keep my bile down.

After telling these stories to my son, he shook his head and put an arm around my waist.

"You got Mommy though, right?"

"Absolutely."

"Did she make you act like a monkey?"

"She still does."

He thought about this for a moment, then shook his head.

"Girls."

(You can write to Ned Hickson at the Siuslaw News at P.O. Box 10, Florence, OR 97439, or visit his website at www.nedhickson.net)

Faith-Based Constitutionalism

BY GENE HEALY AND TIMOTHY LYNCH
SPECIAL TO THE ICONOCLAST

The recent revelation that the National Security Agency has secretly been collecting phone-call data from millions of Americans comes on the heels of Attorney General Gonzales's suggestion that the president may have "inherent executive authority" to wiretap Americans' domestic calls without a warrant. That was only the latest in a series of extraordinary constitutional claims the Bush administration has made during the war on terror. Among those claims: the authority to lock up American citizens on American soil and hold them without charges or trial for the duration of the war on terror and the power to bypass validly enacted statutes that interfere with any tactics the president wants to pursue in the war on terror. Behind all of these claims lies a common principle: presidential power must be left unrestrained, checked only by the good faith of the executive and the remote possibility of impeachment.

What's surprising is that even as the president has been hemorrhaging conservative support on issues such as immigration and spending, conservatives continue to back the president's dubious constitutional claims. The Right has long celebrated Hamiltonian "energy in the executive," but the president's broad theory of executive power goes far beyond that. It borders on James Madison's nightmare, in which legislative, executive, and judicial powers are concentrated in the same hands, a state Madison termed "the very definition of tyranny."

Nonetheless, leading conservatives react scornfully to any attempts to cabin President Bush's power. In March, observing Congress's halting attempts to restore oversight to executive branch surveillance, the Wall Street Journal's editorialists wrote: "Let's hope that the next time some Beltway potentate bemoans the 'Imperial Presidency,' everyone starts hooting with laughter. What we're watching this week is the Lilliputians on Capitol Hill tying down a Bush Administration that increasingly looks like Gulliver."

A month later Gulliver's attorney general, testifying before Congress, advanced the administration's theory of inherent executive authority to conduct warrantless surveillance of Americans' domestic phone calls, while refusing to confirm or deny the existence of any such program. That day, the Justice Department issued what might be termed a "nonclarification clarification" of Gonzales's testimony: "The attorney general's comments today should not be interpreted to suggest the existence or non-

GUEST COMMENTARY

existence of a domestic program."

Conservatives trust George W. Bush not to abuse the vast powers he claims. But only a few years ago, they recognized that not every president was worthy of unconditional trust. They recognized that the presidency can be captured by exceptionally venal, corrupt men who would stop at nothing to retain power. Fairly or unfairly, they saw President Clinton as such a man, and denounced him in lurid terms. Conservatives, including the Journal's editorialists, railed against misuse of hundreds of FBI files and the alleged abuses of FBI powers during the Travelgate scandal. Even now with another candidate named Clinton leading the polls for the Democratic nomination, they unhesitatingly embrace theories of executive power that would allow any future president to spy on Americans without oversight and lock them up without trial.

At the annual meeting of the Conservative Political Action Committee back in February, former congressman Bob Barr, a hard-core conservative and a former impeachment manager in the effort to remove President Clinton, got a notably cool reception when he warned about the dangers of an increasingly imperial presidency. His opponent in the debate, Viet Dinh, the architect of the PATRIOT Act, was more of a crowd-pleaser. Dinh told the audience, "The conservative movement has a healthy skepticism of governmental power, but at times, unfortunately, that healthy skepticism needs to yield."

"At times" might more accurately be recast as "from now on." The Pentagon has taken to calling the fight against terrorism "The Long War." Unlike other wars, this one will not end with a peace treaty across a diplomat's table. It will take decades, and when victory is achieved, we may not know with any certainty that we've won. The extraconstitutional powers we tolerate now will be available for all future presidents, scrupulous or otherwise. And our entire constitutional system repudiates the notion that electing good men is a sufficient check on abuse of power. To preserve that system, this country sorely needs a resurgence of conservatives' "healthy skepticism."

Gene Healy and Timothy Lynch are the authors of the new Cato Institute study "Power Surge: The Constitutional Record of George W. Bush."

Wanted: Dog Food That Tastes Like...

One of my readers once told me, "Genie, you can write more about absolutely nothing than anyone I have ever known." I tried to take it as a compliment. I think this is going to be one of those occasions. I'm going to talk about finicky pets. It think. Of course, it might turn into something entirely different after I get going. Maybe pet food. We'll see.

The situation that inspired this column was my dog Stinky's love of cat food. It actually goes beyond love. It is a bit of an obsession. My late dog Wolfie was the same way. Wolfie and the late Battlecat would run a perpetual game on me toward the ends of their very long lives. The cat would beg for food, eat two bites, and walk away. Enter the dog, emerging from the shadows, to finish the bowl. The bowl would then be empty. The cat would return to cry for more. It was a never-ending cycle. I wasn't sure what was in this for the cat, (although she was probably just senile, bless her heart), but it worked really well for the dog. He gained a lot of weight this way, unfortunately, and at a time in his life when he couldn't run it off. I couldn't keep Wolfie away from the cat's bowl. His dog food, he ignored.

As it turns out, I have friends who admit the same is true of their dogs as well. The bowl of dry dog food can sit there for hours, but let the cat leave his or her bowl with a few morsels remaining (and what cat finishes the entire bowl?) — And the dog wolfs down any crumb that are left like it was caviar.

What is it about cat food that is so darned appealing to dogs? I asked our

Rustic Ramblings

By Dr. Gene Ellis



Gene Ellis, Ed.D. is a Bosque County resident who returned to the family farm after years of living in New Orleans, New York and Florida. She is an artist who holds a doctoral degree from New York University and is writing a book about the minor catastrophes of life.

local vet once why I couldn't just feed cat food to the dog. I mean, wouldn't that make my life a whole heckuva lot easier? It would certainly be acceptable to the dog. He would be deliriously happy. But it turns out that's a no-no. Cat food isn't good for dogs. Too much protein or something.

So my question to the dog food manufacturers is a simple one. Why not just make a dog food that tastes like cat food? It would be wildly popular. All the commercials and ads would have to claim is that dogs love it because it tastes like cat food (the forbidden fruit, maybe even part of the appeal. Everyone always wants what he can't have). Every dog and cat owner would dash right out to purchase this wonderful new product! People would probably stand in line all night before store openings. I should create this myself and become a multimillionaire pet food mogul! Why am I sharing this idea with the masses? — Because I don't have time to do it of course! If I had that kind of time, I'd be guarding the cat's bowl right now. Someone please let me know when the product hits the shelves. I will be first in line.

How The NeoCons Make War On All Of Us

By MELINDA PILLSBURY-FOSTER
SPECIAL TO THE ICONOCLAST

Melanie Morgan, recovered gambling addict and San Francisco talk show host, announced two days ago that her new project, *Censure Carter*, will be launching a series of TV ads urging that Congress take up the issue of censuring Jimmy Carter for sympathizing with the Palestinians.

Morgan is in this way fulfilling her obligations as one in the string of political tools activated by John Fund to carry out the strategic disinformation campaigns for his NeoCon employers.

Morgan's lackluster career took off when she was recruited by Fund several years ago and since then she has found a new faith, NeoConism. A frequently hosted speaker at events put on by such front groups as Political Vanguard, Morgan is just another in a series of individuals to hook her hopes not to the truth but to doing the nasty work of this White House.

Under fire from all sides this White House desperately needs to create the appearance that Republicans are united behind George Bush. On the front page of Political Vanguard you learn to your amazement that George Bush has an approval rating of 40.5%. Doubtless these figures came directly from Karl Rove and reflect his immediate family members.

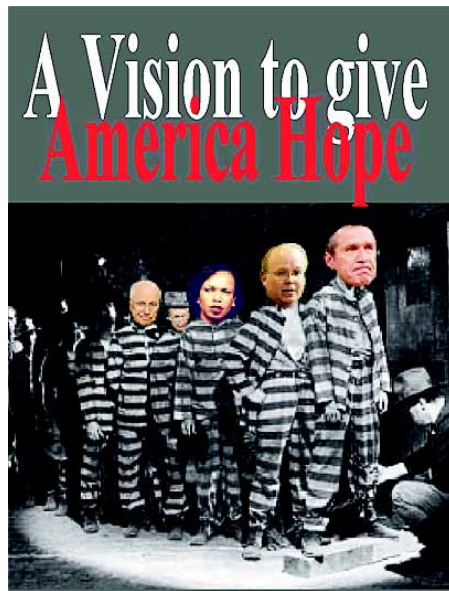
Faux websites, phoney organizations, constructed and populated, are a long time political weapon used in many ways by the NeoCons. During the last part of the 2004 Presidential Campaign a website, purporting to represent swift boat vets was launched to create the appearance that Kerry lacked support from other veterans. And this was most likely so, but the vehemence of the attacks from <SwiftBoatVets.com> can be traced to the NeoCons.

Sen. Zell Miller presented an award to the group at a banquet sponsored by the American Conservative Union. On their blog page two hard line NeoCon co-travelers are the first two authorities cited on "the implications of John McCain's preference for 'clean government' over the First Amendment." Those are George Will and Ed Crane of Cato.

Naturally, the event was covered favorably by Fox News. Miller is quoted there as saying, "The swift boat veterans performed an invaluable service to America," Miller said in a statement. "These veterans took a lot of undeserved criticism for daring to speak the truth." One wonders what they risked given the toothlessness of the liberal establishment.

Much of this is already known, though in the way of the flow of events, mostly forgotten. A quick read of the excellent article by Joe Conason, appearing on <Salon.com> shortly after the events, helps us see the connections that activated this particular attack.

Not that Kerry did not deserve to have his military service questioned; his brief hiatus in the combat zone cast no credit on him. He used it as a political tool himself, while still in the service and when he grabbed the Democratic nomination. Myself, lacking a candidate I could vote for chose to vote for someone who, if she was ever a politician is now a good one, namely Susan B. Anthony. Do not forget that still after over two centuries such as John Kerry still have failed to simply affirm in Constitutional law the inherent rights of women.



As I write another such attack in going on, still unnoticed except by those stalwart veterans who are feeling the impact, on the Veteran's Party. Philip Meskin, a Vietnam Vet has worked assiduously to start a party that would stand up for American's Veterans for years. In 2003 he succeeded. The bogus Veteran's Party has even claimed to be the original; impossible given their own charges. But doubtless Rove told them the big lie works.

Now, doubtless because that party threatens to bring attention to the plight of Veterans who return from service to slow deaths of neglect, suffering from diseases caused by their service, that voice must be stifled. Neither major party is to be trusted. The means in this case is a website that copies the information obtained on the Meskin site and launches claims of wrongdoing that are

Lawsuit Criticizes FEMA, Calls For Accountability — While Housing Crisis Continues —

WASHINGTON, D.C. — A lawsuit against the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has been filed in U.S District Court in Houston, on behalf of Hurricane Katrina and Rita evacuees, including those whose disaster housing assistance is threatened to end on May 31, 2006.

The suit asserts "FEMA is failing to fulfill its statutory obligations to provide temporary housing assistance to victims of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Instead, FEMA has made arbitrary, inconsistent, and inequitable housing decisions without using any ascertainable standards. As a result, tens of thousands of the most vulnerable Americans - among them, the elderly, the disabled, children, and the poor - are faced with the real threat of becoming homeless." The plaintiffs are seeking a temporary restraining order to enjoin FEMA from ending its Section 403 housing aid program on May 31, 2006, and injunctive relief until such time that the case can be brought to trial.

FEMA has announced that it will end rent payments for an estimated 17,000 evacuated families living in apartments rented by cities, states, and social service agencies on May 31, 2006, even though, in many cases, families entered into 12 month leases with assurance from FEMA that their aid would be continued. FEMA is attempting to move evacuees

clearly bogus; these are debunked with letters from the agencies receiving the complaints.

These bogus sites usually look far more professional than do those that are genuine. The Morgan site is an exception; it went up after this correlation was noticed.

When asked what effect this had on his work to help veterans Meskin said, "This is destroying our ability to save veterans in every imaginable way." Meskin has himself spent countless hours in this work both before and after he started the Veteran's party.

But the point here is the use of bogus organizations as political weapons to skew opinion at critical junctures as events unfold and also to understand the cadre of individual employed in that ugly work.

John Fund, Melanie Morgan, and those named in the Conason article are only a few of the cadre of operatives whose livelihoods depend on destroying organizations and individuals trying to achieve positive change unfriendly to the NeoCon goals or who represent threats to NeoCons power.

You can expect that now that they are under fire for the first time the NeoCons will be launching more similar attacks. Be warned.

The American people need to understand. They need to 'get' how the Constitution was meant to work and how the conversion that predates the NeoCons was orchestrated and by whom.

One step on that path is to understand what George Bush has actually done. His activities are not just politically destructive they have been criminal. What is needed is not impeachment but prosecution for criminal offenses.

Therefore the people will put George W. Bush on Trial in the Court of Conscience.

GUEST COMMENTARY

There are many reasons that those in positions of trust failed to act. They are, as are all of us, all too willing to overlook what is inconvenient. It is a fact of human nature that we can usually see and accept corruption when we see it elsewhere. But when we confront evidence that our own lives and jobs and egos are on the line the blinders go up.

When the corruption reached the highest level and those paid and trusted to do the right thing saw the end of their own perks on the horizon they were frozen in the headlights, vainly looking for any other way out. That is where they are now. The only exit is truth and that they cannot face.

This time, we the people, have to do it ourselves. The vision of America that is true, the one that whispers to us still that we are all equal and none are above the law, for that vision we must be prepared to act.

Get off the Grids, Organize locally, Build Coalition, Try George W. Bush for Racketeering.

May God bless the journey that leads us to freedom.

The Justice Coalition, a long existing organization with a record for taking corrupt judges off the bench, has activated to provide for Americans a demonstration of how the justice system should work. Bush is the first example.

To contact them e-mail: the.melinda@yahoo.com.

Hear Melinda at BBSRadio.com, Fridays, at 4 p.m. PT on *The Spiritual Politician*. Bringing government, a human tool, into alignment with our spiritual natures.

from its 403 emergency housing program to its 408 temporary housing program, which has more stringent eligibility criteria. The complaint alleges that FEMA's procedures for determining eligibility are haphazard and unclear.

"I have been a social worker for 30 years and witnessed my share of government bureaucracies that are hard for people in crisis to navigate," said Sheila Crowley, President of the National Low Income Housing Coalition. "How FEMA has designed and executed its legal obligation to assure safe and decent housing for people displaced by the Katrina disaster is by far the most inaccessible and dehumanizing service delivery system I have ever seen."

"FEMA's plan to terminate emergency assistance to Katrina and Rita evacuees who have nowhere else to go is a new blow to already hard-hit families," said Maria Foscarinis, Executive Director of the National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty. "This is another misstep in the agency's bungled response to Gulf Coast disaster, and it will only exacerbate homelessness in many cities."

Advocates for low-income people applauded the class action lawsuit as a much-needed intervention to prevent more hardship for people who lost their homes in the Gulf Coast hurricanes. Despite in-

numerable reports from around the country of the harsh, capricious, and incompetent treatment of displaced people at the hands of FEMA, the Bush Administration has not taken action to improve FEMA's response. The White House has not acted on its own recommendation that temporary housing assistance for evacuees be handled by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), instead of FEMA. Several organizations wrote to White House Chief of Staff Joshua Bolten on May 4, 2006 to alert him of the impending crisis and to request White House assistance. To date, they have received no direct response.

Last week, Congressmen Richard Baker (R-LA) and Barney Frank (D-MA) introduced H.R. 5393, the Natural Disaster Housing Reform Act of 2006, which would designate HUD as the federal agency in charge of housing assistance for people displaced by natural disaster for 30 days or more. Advocates wrote them to applaud the bill and to recommend improvements.


This is the third lawsuit brought against FEMA for its abysmal job of providing temporary housing aid for Katrina and Rita evacuees. In *McWaters v. FEMA*, FEMA was ordered to extend hotel stays for tens of thousands of evacuees who were about to be evicted with no other housing options. In *Brau v. FEMA*, the class action complainants have sought benefits useable by people with disabilities.

Classifieds

1-254-675-3634

Classified Word Ads
are non-bordered, text-only, ads that are categorized on the classified page/s by: For Sale, For Rent, Garage Sales, Miscellaneous, Notices, Employment, Services, Cards of Thanks, and Real Estate.

Ad Rate: \$5.00 (paid in advance) or \$6.00 (billed, WAC) minimum for 10 words or less, then 20¢ per word thereafter.

We Accept    

Bordered Ads Are Charged At The Regular Display Rate



Real Estate



TEXAS LAND BANK
FLCA

We Make Farm & Ranch, Country Land & Home Loans
That's What We Do.

TexasLandBank.com
1-888-467-6411
Steve Ostrom or Justin Wiethorn
Waco Credit Office

 Part of the Fannie Credit System 



For Sale

DISNEY AREA STAYS — 7 days, 6 nights. Paid \$600, will sacrifice for \$199. Good for one year. 254-225-0408.

w21-22

Must See To Believe!

3 BR, 2 bath brick, one BR with outside entrance, office, living room, dining room, fireplace, 35 ft. in-ground pool, patio, 1 BR poolhouse/mother-in-law house, complete woodworking shop. Back yard privacy fence, large pecan trees, and many, many extras \$189,000

Debbie Holmes Real Estate
254-932-6356



House Squeezes Aid To Palestine Authority

WASHINGTON — Splitting the pro-Israel lobby and upsetting the White House, the U.S. House voted 361-37 last Thursday to increase sanctions on the Hamas-led Palestinian Authority.

The bill would cut aid to non-governmental groups in the West Bank and Gaza, prevent members of the Palestinian Authority from attaining visas, restricts contact with Hamas over its terrorism classification, and curtails the executive branch's power to limit the restrictions.

Although health programs to Palestine were spared cuts, the Bush administration said that the sanctions went overboard. The White House already slashed funds to the Palestinian government on condition it honors Israel's right to exist and turns its back on terrorism.

In January, Hamas attained power in the Palestinian government through democratically-held elections. But House lawmakers, though unanimous in

Female Muslim Preachers Graduate In Morocco

RABAT, Morocco — The North African nation of Morocco graduated 50 women earlier this month to strengthen state-controlled mosques in a bid to promote a teaching of Islam that undermines clerics who preach radical extremism.

With a salary of \$500 a month, these female morchidats will primarily teach women and occasionally men in mosques and provide aid in prisons, hospitals, and schools — not lead prayers in mosques as male imams currently do.

The appointment of this pioneering group of female preachers is for the most part an unprecedented event in the Arab world, including Morocco. Female scholars of Islam, however, have been on the rise in Egypt and Iran.

Most male-dominated Muslim societies refuse to grant women senior religious positions, although women are not restricted from becoming religious scholars according to Islamic teachings. Female imams, for example, preach to groups of women only.

Moroccan King Mohammed VI, a descendant of the Muslim Prophet Muhammad, launched his own training campaign in a vow to ban foreign religious doctrine in his kingdom. The campaign was spurred by the May 16, 2003, suicide bombings that occurred in Casablanca where radical Muslim clerics preached violence to poor and disillusioned youths, according to Moroccan officials.



LIMITED SUPPLY... Get Yours Now!



*More than just a statement of fashion...
... a statement of*

INDEPENDENCE

T-SHIRT

100% cotton, short sleeve, white t-shirt
Adult sizes: S - M - L - XL - XXL - XXXL

\$19.95 ea.

+ shipping

T-Shirt Order Form

Indicate # of each size

S ___ M ___ L ___ XL ___ XXL ___ XXXL ___

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Shipping & Handling: 1 shirt \$5.39
each additional shirt... \$2.50

shirts: _____

X \$19.95 _____ (circle)
Cash
+ s/h: _____ Check
(see above) Visa
MasterCard
American Express

= Total: _____

Credit Card Orders Include
Name on Card, Card #, Expiration Date

Send orders to:
The Lone Star Iconoclast
P.O. Box 569
Clifton, TX 76634
or order online at:
www.lonestaricon.com

Family Is Most Important. Be Home For Them Daily.

Positions Available for the Petroleum Products Delivery Drivers in the DFW and Waco Area.

Waco 1-800-782-5064
DFW 1-888-371-9107

- Excellent Pay
- Paid Holidays
- 401K Retirement
- Great Benefits
- Paid Vacation
- Paid College Tuition for Children

Class A CDL License with X Endorsement and 1 Year recent driving experience necessary

www.coastaltransport.net

\$1,000 Sign On Bonus



WAKE UP



To An Independent Look At The Truth



www.lonestaricon.com

Afghan President Orders Investigation Into Civilian Deaths

KABUL, Afghanistan — The official number of Afghani civilians killed as a result of a U.S.-led strike against Taliban forces remained unclear last week. Afghanistan President Hamid Karzai has called on the commander of U.S. forces in Afghanistan to explain how the casualties occurred while he opened an internal investigation of the assault.

The attack on 80 Taliban now believed dead is said to have happened in the Panjwayi district of Kandahar province late last Sunday and lasted into Monday. At least 16 civilians were killed, according to the province's governor. Villagers and a human rights official says, however, that there were many more deaths.

Some of the civilian deaths were the result of the Taliban forces hiding in the

villagers' homes, said Governor Asadullah Khalid. A teacher in the village

of Tulakhan reported to AFP that the strike killed as many as 40 civilians, including children, wounded about 50 others, and destroyed eight houses from bombings. U.S. forces said that their raid targeted the Azizi village.

Human rights groups noted that last week's fighting was some of the heaviest since the 2001 start of the U.S.-led war in Afghanistan. More than 300 people, mainly Taliban fighters, have been killed. The International Committee of the Red Cross called the fighting in southern Afghanistan as "worsening."

Afghans suffered their worst "friendly fire" attack in July 2002 when U.S.-coalition forces killed 48 civilians and wounded 117 while the group was attending a wedding party in Uruzgan province, according to Afghan officials.

Local Resident Is SFA Graduate

NACOGDOCHES — Pamela Denise Bryant of Crawford received a Bachelor of Science degree in interdisciplinary studies during spring commencement of May 13, at Stephen F. Austin State University.

Elk Foundation To Host Benefit

CRAWFORD — The Central Texas Chapter of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF) will be hosting its annual banquet on Saturday, July 29. The gathering will be at the Old Amsler Building in downtown Crawford at 5:30 p.m., beginning with social time, raffles, and games. The meal will begin at 7:30 with the live auction following.

"This is your chance to support the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation and it's vision of a future where elk roam in wild places across our continent, challenging and inspiring generations of hunters and other conservationists to preserve that legacy and pass it on to those who follow," said a Foundation member.

An individual ticket which includes one \$35 membership in the RMEF and a subscription to the Bugle, is \$50. A couples ticket, which includes two meals, membership, and Bugle subscription, is \$75. A table of eight which includes one membership and Bugle

subscription, is \$250. A meal only ticket may be purchased for \$30.

"We would invite businesses and individuals to donate to this year's banquet," said the spokesman. "We need items for our live auction, silent auction, raffle, games and door prizes."

This year the Foundation is allowing businesses and individuals that would like the opportunity to participate to underwrite items. An underwritten item will display a sign showing that support. The name will also be placed in the banquet program stating what item is being underwritten and a small advertisement if it is a business underwriting the item.

"We are looking forward to an evening filled with fun games, great giveaways and unique merchandise," the spokesman continued. "All we need is you to make it complete."

Tickets may be purchased by contacting: Gary or Teresa Bowdoin at 254-486-2288 or 254-640-0844, or Robert Webb at 254-717-2193.

FOIFT To Sponsor Responsible Rights Seminar In Dallas, June 23

DALLAS — The Freedom of Information Foundation of Texas (FOIFT) will host a Responsible Rights seminar on Friday, June 23, in Dallas. The seminar will be held from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in the Main Auditorium of the J. Erik Jonsson Central Library at 1515 Young Street.

Responsible Rights: Government in the Sunshine is a traveling symposium designed to develop and enhance understanding of the changing landscape of open government. It is directed toward the general public, elected officials, government employees, and representatives of the media.

Scheduled presenters include Susan Denmon Gusky, and attorney with Vinson & Elkins L.L.P.; Hadassah Schloss, cost rules administrator for the Open Records Division of the Office of the Attorney General of Texas; and Paul C. Watler, a shareholder with Jenkens & Gilchrist, P.C.

The seminar is divided into two sections: the Texas Open Meetings Act in the morning and the Texas Public Information Act in the afternoon. The fee is \$50 for the whole day, or \$30 for either the morning or afternoon only. No meals will be arranged or provided as a part of the seminar, but a 90-minute lunch break is included in the schedule.

Advance registration is required due to limited space. The course materials have been approved by the Office of the Attorney General as meeting the requirements for open government training for public officials.

To register, contact the FOIFT office at 214/977-6658, or complete a registration form available on the FOIFT website at <www.foift.org> and fax or mail to FOIFT at 214/977-6666, 400 S. Record St., Dallas, TX, 75202. This event is sponsored by the Dallas Public Library.

READERS:
Place Your **ADVERTISING** Message In A Newspaper That Is.....

...Fiercely Independent!

The Lone Star **ICONOCLAST**

www.lonestaricon.com

To Advertise In THE ICONOCLAST, Call (254) 675-3634. Thanks For Your Support.

THE VIGIL 26 DAYS IN CRAWFORD, TEXAS
REPORTED BY W. LEON SMITH FOREWORD BY CINDY SHEEHAN & THE STAFF OF THE LONE STAR ICONOCLAST

reported by THE ICONOCLAST \$9.95 +tax/sh ORDER TODAY at www.disinfo.com

Mission Impossible 3

PG-13

Runtime: 2 hours 10 min.

Thurs - Fri - Sat - Sun June 1, 2, 3, 4 7 p.m. each night



306 W. 5th St. Clifton, Texas

All tickets: \$5.00 per person (254) 675-1229

Coming Soon to www.lonestaricon.com:



- Columns By Attorneys
- Legal Services Directory
- Advocacy For Individual Rights

The Iconoclast encourages those in the legal profession to take advantage of this unique opportunity, while at the same time financially helping The Lone Star Iconoclast remain afloat.

We encourage your participation. Please call Deborah Mathews at (254) 675-3336 for details.



Unspoken Injustice: Your Neighbor The Sex Offender

By **STEPHEN WEBSTER**
INVESTIGATIVE REPORTER

Did you know that in Denton County, a small, family-oriented enclave in North Texas, there are over 70 convicted sex predators – men and women who assaulted children under the age of 12 – who never served a jail sentence for their crimes? The sum total of this county's offenders comes to 176; only 12 are currently in jail. In Flower Mound, one of North Texas' most beautiful, sought-after villas, 13 such individuals are presently living unmolested. And in Highland Village, a cornerstone of family and conservative values, five more lurk. Dallas County is worse: there, 843 convicted sex criminals are free to live, work and play. The State of Texas only requires these individuals to register their home address; the same action asked of law-abiding citizens seeking to obtain a drivers license.

According to the National Center for Sex Offender Management, nearly half of all convicted child molesters are arrested for committing other violent crimes within half a decade of their first conviction. Perhaps more shockingly, the Higher Education Act of 1998 explicitly stipulates that any convicted drug offender over the age of 18 is to be barred from receiving a Pell Grant for one year, whereas no prohibition has been established for convicted sex offenders, or any other breed of criminal for that matter. This country incarcerates more of its population than any nation on Earth – one out of 136 citizens are behind bars – yet somehow cannot manage to find room in its prisons for the offenders that do the most damage.

But the problem is much more widespread than that. Ernie Allen, President of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, claims that somewhere between 80,000 and 100,000 convicted sex offenders have completely absconded from the government's not-so watchful eye. Worse, the Department of Justice has determined that a child is sexually assaulted somewhere in America every four minutes. Ultimately, the leniency being given to convicted sexual predators is not somewhere far away, in another city or state. It is endemic to America's system of justice. Because of this, these individuals are currently living in your neighborhood, working in your office, and prowling your streets.

How can this be?

That is the question Christopher Largen has been asking since he was 21 years old. A Denton resident and repeat victim of childhood sexual assault, Largen is the founder of a nonprofit organization called "Building B.L.O.C.K. – Better Lives for Our Communities and Children." Largen, who taglines himself as an "internationally published novelist, journalist, screenwriter, public speaker



CHRISTOPHER LARGEN, one of Building BLOCK's founding members, is a community activist, published author and journalist, attempting to raise awareness of this unspoken injustice.

and social activist," took several hours to speak with THE LONE STAR ICONOCLAST to detail how he perceives this problem, and what he believes can be done to fix it.

"Breaking the silence about the abuse is critical," said Largen. "That's the main priority of Building B.L.O.C.K. There can be little healing for victims until they break their silence. Predators thrive on secrets, and the system of injustice that allows these perpetrators to go free thrives on apathy and social disconnection from this issue. I often wonder if we as a people are going through some kind of collective and unspoken dissociation ourselves. American children are being molested, raped, tortured, murdered, even buried alive. We cannot separate ourselves from the fate of our neighbor's children. We must act as if these children are our own."

"Many people don't realize how devastating sexual abuse can be, because it didn't happen to them," continued Largen. "But it's become widespread in this culture. If it didn't happen to you, then you know someone who's a survivor. So how could our public priorities become so skewed and diverted? Perhaps it happened because even though abuse is considered an acceptable topic

for talk shows, it's still not considered proper dinner conversation in this country. It's not a pleasant issue, but until we start talking about it in our families, schools, and local communities, we can't mobilize forces to address the problem."

Over the next several weeks, LSI will be running a series of investigative reports detailing the widespread leniency being dolled out to sex criminals, and the cycle of abuse that turns their victims into tomorrow's offenders. There are several judges in Denton County who have records of giving these criminals probation, even after repeat offenses and multiple convictions. Furthermore, during our own research we noticed that

dockets detailing the trials of several area sex criminals have simply vanished from the court's archives.

The goal of this series of reports is to break our community's silence on this unspoken injustice. We will be joining with Building B.L.O.C.K. to raise awareness of this important topic, and we encourage our readers to write in and get involved with this cumulative effort to shine a light on a most painful topic.

For more information on Building B.L.O.C.K., visit <www.building-block.org>.

Further reading:

<http://www.familywatchdog.us>
<http://www.sexcriminals.com>

SPECIAL PROMOTION BUSINESS CARD ADS

Call **ON THE INTERNET and IN THE PAPER!**
(254) 675-3336

The Lone Star
ICONOCLAST

Services

For advertising
information,
call **(254) 675-3634**

Wrecker Service 24 Hr. Full Service Glass Work Service by Lynx Foreign & Domestic

Bill's Body Shop

REPAIR FACILITY ALWAYS OWNER'S CHOICE
Brewco Frame Machine & Measuring System

Highway 6 in
Valley Mills, TX

phone: (254) 932-6536
fax: (254) 932-6588
cell: (254) 709-2235



Leon's
FLOOR COVERING

Carpet & Vinyl
Formica Cabinet Tops
Wallpaper
Eureka Vacuum Cleaners
and Service

QUALITY MATERIAL SOLD AND INSTALLED WITH PRIDE
302 West 5th Clifton, Texas **FREE ESTIMATES** Phone 675-8686
Mike & Kim Prescher Home 675-8291